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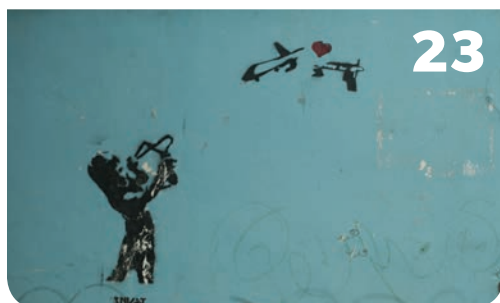


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## CREATIVITY, COURAGE AND CONTENT

March + April 16 Volume 19, Issue 4

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**F**or music fans and pop culture aficionados, the first few months of 2016 have provided bitter pills to swallow.

The loss of two of the most innovative individuals operating in what was once called “popular music” – David Bowie and George Martin – has reverberated throughout the world. The former, a multimedia Renaissance man, made his mark not only through his music but through a dedication to chasing change, both in his approach to performance and his songwriting. The latter, known affectionately as “the Fifth Beatle,” shaped the musical direction of the 20th century and beyond as the producer of some of the most groundbreaking pop music of his day. Both of them made innovating look – and sound – easy and exhilarating.

Some might say it’s easier to go out on a limb and be downright daring in certain creative disciplines such as music or visual art, compared to film and television. While musicians have record label bean-counters and fickle audiences to appease, and visual artists may need to occasionally tug at the purse-strings of assorted benefactors and funding organizations, creativity in the TV and film world is often seen to be at loggerheads with commercial concerns. Ad sales, focus groups, risk-averse executives – and of course, the final decree as issued by ratings and box office numbers – don’t necessarily provide the friendliest environment for unbridled idea-hatching.

But like a well-poured pint of Guinness, the cream does always rise to the top. As seen in both our annual Global 100 listing of the top production companies working in the non-fiction and unscripted realm, chosen with input from our readers, and in our selection of MIPTV Picks, every year brings its share of incredible content to inspire, educate and entertain us, and behind that content is a team of creators and commissioners dedicated to doing great work. And, as seen in our annual Changemakers report, there are companies and individuals dedicated to developing new, exciting ways to tell us stories about our world.

Of course, history has proven time and again that taking the odd leap into the unknown can bring unfathomable results. Try your luck, hone your vision and who knows, you may create a new genre of programming – no one knew *The Real World* would work, after all – or you may tell a story previously unearthed, but that *everyone* will talk about, à la *Making a Murderer*.

Not everything will work. Maybe, like Thomas Edison before you, you’ll figure out the 10,000 ways not to create a light bulb before you stumble on the right one. But creativity thrives within the right mix of courage and tenacity. In the words of a creative and courageous individual that we lost too soon:

“I don’t know where I’m going from here, but I promise it won’t be boring.”

Words to live by.

Cheers,  
Barry Walsh  
Editor and content director  
*realscreen*

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## DRUM ROLL, PLEASE.....

**F**or the last several months I've been evaluating the options related to the timing and location of the Realscreen Summit. Many of you responded to a survey at the beginning of the year regarding the pros and cons of various locales, and delegates at this year's Summit were extensively canvassed on their thoughts regarding the event's timing and location. I've also spoken personally to a great number of stakeholders about whether to keep the conference where it was conceived – in Washington, D.C. – or to move to another industry center (such as Los Angeles), or even to a “destination” conference city (such as New Orleans).

Well, the results have been tabulated, analyzed and very carefully considered, and the decision is made. The Realscreen Summit will be staying in D.C.

The list of factors to consider in arriving at this conclusion was extensive – from weather patterns, to direct-flight schedules and flying time, to timing of other leading events and many, many more. But at the core was one determining factor – where are the most senior programming execs prepared to travel to be pitched and to commission original content? And without exception, the answer was right where we are.

The effectiveness of the Realscreen Summit is directly correlated to the number and caliber of commissioning executives who are there with a mandate to hear and greenlight pitches, as well as foster relationships and develop new ones with the production community, and I'm confident this is the right decision for the event – and, by extension, its ability to benefit your business.

Feedback from the 2016 edition of the Summit serves to back this up, and our move to the sparkly new Marriott Marquis was very well received. Here's a small sampling of the feedback:

*“I love Realscreen's events, but this one was very well planned, the location was the best I've seen and the opportunity to fluidly move from meeting to meeting, [from] event to party was unmatched. I think the Realscreen team did a magnificent job of executing it this year.”*

*“Truly the preeminent event for unscripted television of all styles and genres – from documentary to reality, from network to digital to branded, Realscreen is the place to connect with people who truly define the business... and its future.”*

*“In the world of factual, reality, unscripted and documentary programming, Realscreen sets the table for the year of the business I'll do with the people who attend the conference. It's always been the place to meet new clients and rebuild business with my clients who attend.”*

Next year's Summit will take place from Monday, January 26 to Thursday, January 29. Please take special note of this, as there is a change in our regular Sunday-to-Wednesday pattern.

Of course, I do hope we'll see you before then at Realscreen West in Santa Monica, June 8-10.

‘Til next time, go well.  
Claire Macdonald  
VP, Publisher  
realscreen

### UPCOMING ADVERTISING & SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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#### MAY/JUNE

Editorial features: This issue features our annual reality report, a special focus on archive, a production music spotlight, and a focus on documentaries.

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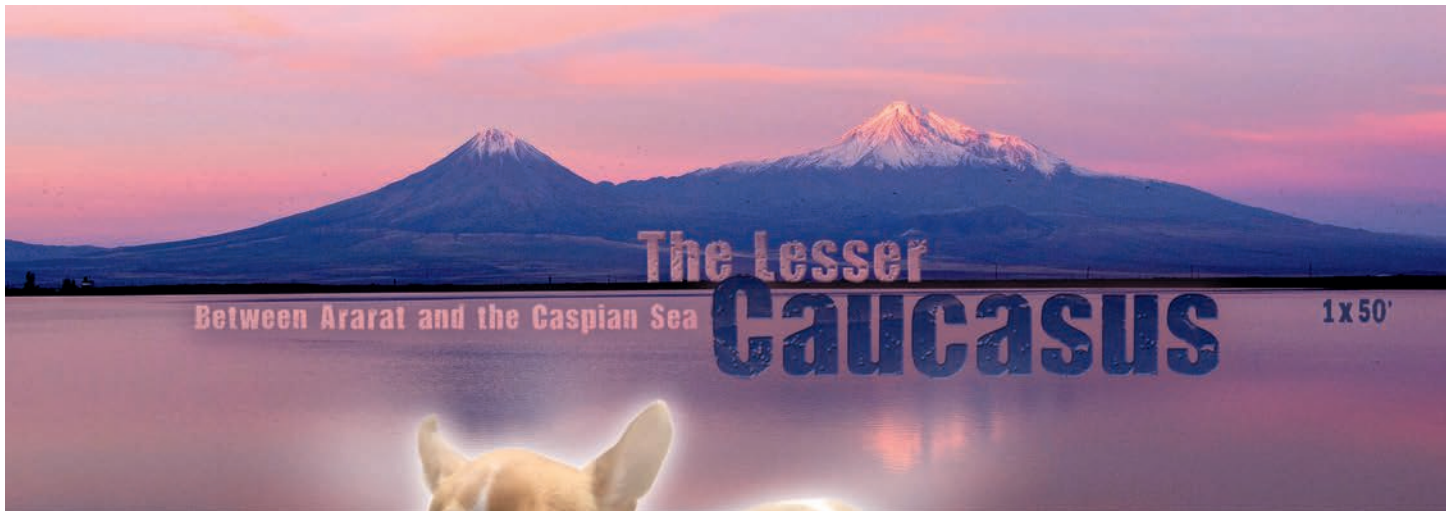
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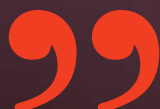
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# LOOKING AHEAD TO THE HOT DOCS FORUM

In advance of the annual Hot Docs festival and conference in Toronto, here's a look at the 19 projects selected to take part in its pitching event, the Hot Docs Forum.

BY DANIELE ALCINII

**D**avid Alvarado and Jason Sussberg's *Objective: Change the World (w/t)*, featuring scientist and TV "Science Guy" Bill Nye (pictured), and Sergio Rapu's *Eating Up Easter* are among the 19 projects headed to this year's Hot Docs Forum, an international documentary market and pitching event.

Selected from more than 200 international submissions, the projects will be presented to a roundtable of leading commissioning editors, film fund representatives, financiers, programming executives and delegates during the mornings of May 3 and May 4. Projects come from 16 countries, and include films from 11 female directors and 26 female producers.

Commissioners confirmed to date will hail from such outlets as Amazon, ARTE, BBC 'Storyville,' Discovery Communications, CANAL+, Channel 4, CNN Films, Condé Nast Entertainment Group Digital, DR Danish Broadcasting, Fox International Channels, HBO, ITVS, ARD-MDR, MTV, Netflix, NHK, The New York Times' 'Op-Docs,' Participant Media, Shaw Media, Showtime, Super Channel, Sundance Institute, Vimeo, ZDF and others.

The Shaw Media-Hot Docs Funds Hot Docs Forum Pitch Prize will award CDN\$10,000 to the best Canadian pitch at the event, as determined by a committee of non-Canadian, international commissioners on hand.

The Cuban Hat Award, meanwhile, will see money raised over the course of the Forum's two days given to the observers' favorite pitch, as determined by ballot. Additionally, the Entertainment One Mounties' Hat Pitch will provide an observer with the opportunity to pitch their own project.

The 2016 Hot Docs Canadian International Film Festival runs from April 28 to May 8 in Toronto. At right, the projects to appear at the 2016 Hot Docs Forum:



## American Monster

Production Company: Yellowbelly Films (U.S.)  
Director: Patricia E. Gillespie

## Billy

Production Companies: Parabola Films, Little By Little Films (Canada, United Kingdom)  
Director: Lindsey Dryden

## Disaster Capitalism

Production Company: Media Stockade Pty Ltd (Australia)  
Director: Thor Neureiter

## Dolphin Man

Production Companies: Anemon Productions, Storyline Entertainment, Les Films du Balibari (Greece, Canada, France)  
Director: Lefteris Charitos

## Dozhd', It's Raining on Moscow

Production Company: Petit à Petit Production (France)  
Director: Alexandra Sollogoub

## Eating Up Easter

Production Companies: Mara Films, Kartemquin Films (U.S., Chile)  
Director: Sergio Rapu

## Family in the Bubble

Production Companies: Documoon, Shangma Pictures, napafilms Ltd. (South Korea, Finland)  
Director: Minji Ma

## Happy Winter

Production Companies: Indyca S.n.c., Zenit Arti Audiovisive (Italy)  
Director: Giovanni Totaro

## Mudlow

Production Company: Cynthia Wade Productions (U.S.)  
Directors: Cynthia Wade, Sasha Friedlander

## Objective: Change the World (w/t)

Production Company: Structure Films (U.S.)  
Directors: David Alvarado, Jason Sussberg

## Over the Limit

Production Companies: Telemark, Ventana-Film GmbH. (Poland, Germany)  
Director: Marta Prus

## Rules to Live By

Production Company: Little Darkroom Films (U.S.)  
Director: Hope Litoff

## The Accidental King

Production Company: Made in Copenhagen (Denmark)  
Directors: Emil Langballe, Lukasz Konopa

## The Judge

Production Company: Idle Wild Films (U.S.)  
Director: Erika Cohn

## The Last Animals

Production Company: Atlas Films (U.S.)  
Director: Kate Brooks

## The Patriot

Production Companies: T.T.V Productions, One Man Show (Israel)  
Directors: Daniel Sivan, Alon Sahar

## Project Love (working title)

Production Company: Pulse Films (United Kingdom)  
Director: Tim Travers-Hawkins

## Yoghurt Utopia

Production Companies: Chimerica Media, Massa D'or Produccions (United Kingdom, Spain)  
Directors: David Baksh, Anna Thomson

## Showgirls of Pakistan

Production Company: Nomad Films (Canada, Pakistan)  
Director: Saad Khan

# Greenlit & Gone

A look at what's on the way from assorted networks, and what's on the way out.



## **Skin Wars: Fresh Paint**

Network: GSN

Production company:

Michael Levitt Productions

## **The Mike Stud Project (w/t)**

Network: Esquire

Production company: Den of Thieves

## **GI Janes**

Network: Channel 4 (UK)

Production company: Lion Television

## **Best Time Ever with Neil**

**Patrick Harris**

Network: NBC

Production company: ITV America

## POINTED ARROW: A Producer's Perspective

BY JOHN SMITHSON

**W**ho says crime doesn't pay? There's no doubt that true crime is the genre of the moment. Everyone wants it – audiences, SVOD providers and the TV networks.

On the international circuit this year, the talk has been of one show, *Making a Murderer*. The out-of-nowhere, runaway success of podcast *Serial*, then HBO's *The Jinx* and now the Netflix 10-parter have combined to make innovative approaches to true crime all the rage.

Crime has never really gone out of fashion. It grips viewers with its rich mix of compelling storylines, strong characters, and powerful human interest.

It's a genre that enables specialist networks to thrive. Investigation Discovery is one of the fastest growing cable nets in the U.S., with a strong female following. The Justice Network is a relatively new operation with ambitious plans in the genre.

But what has changed is the opportunity to produce big, impactful and long-running series.

The story of Steven Avery has all the classic elements of a scripted crime thriller, with fabulous twists and turns, and a story that keeps on giving – with the magic frisson that it's all true.

Crime has long been a staple of the scripted world. The nitty-gritty forensic detail of *CSI* has engaged a global audience and sustained itself for more than 300 episodes. Characters from fiction such as Sherlock Holmes and from all-too-real recent history such as Pablo Escobar have been the stuff of compelling crime drama.

So is it really such a surprise that *Making a Murderer* plays at 10 x one hour? In the binge viewing world of SVOD, why not?

Where it gets exciting for producers is where you go next. Big, iconic crime stories which are tinged with controversy, such as that of the West Memphis Three – where three teenagers were convicted of the murder of three young children – have garnered much acclaim as single films. In this new world, they suddenly feel worthy of the

full 10-part treatment.

There's one big creative challenge. The tempting stories to tell are the big landmark crimes of the past. But increasingly there is a need for a current-day angle. Thus, clever producers are looking for ways to graft an active, present tense narrative onto gripping, past tense stories.

There's also a big problem. I've lost count of how many times we've been asked for the new *Staircase*. This was the brilliant, French-made, eight-part doc series from over 10 years ago, which followed a domestic murder investigation in North Carolina. There are so many brilliant plot twists, it's breath-taking. *The Jinx* and *Making a Murderer* have come closest to this classic series, and there have been sequels, with another in development. But what will be next? No question, commissioners are desperate. But finding these stories is not simply a matter of setting the development team loose on Google for a few hours.

You've got to be on these stories at the beginning, when you've no idea how they will end. They need persistence, stamina, and luck. It's no surprise that *Making a Murderer* was 10 years in the making. These are most certainly not shows that you can knock out in nine months.

Still, many developments are making this genre more attractive for producers. In the U.S. in particular, so many trials are now on camera. The use of CCTV evidence, huge in the UK, is now growing in the U.S. Increasingly, there is a rich resource of real footage.

And there is one final fortunate – or perhaps unfortunate – reality. There's an inexhaustible supply of stories, with new crimes cropping up every day. Combine that with media-savvy lawyers, cops, victims and criminals, and you have one genre that is definitely here to stay.

*John Smithson is creative director of Arrow Media, an indie he co-founded in 2011. Previously he was chief executive at Darlow Smithson Productions.*

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# PEOPLEMOVES

A look at the moves being made in the non-fiction content world, and who's making them.



► Former Banijay International MD **Emmanuelle Namiech** (pictured) has been named CEO at London-based Passion Distribution, effective May 3.

In her new position, Namiech will work closely with Elin Thomas, director of global sales, and MD Nick Rees to drive the Tinopolis-owned company's global strategy while fostering new and existing business opportunities with content partners.

She will take over from Sally Miles, who is stepping down from her post of founder and CEO in the coming months.

At Banijay, Namiech oversaw the transformation of the company's distribution strategy while expanding its portfolio to include factual, fact-ent and scripted content. Additionally, she oversaw Banijay's sales and acquisitions teams based in both London and Los Angeles.

► *Millionaire Matchmaker* producer Intuitive Entertainment has hired **Colin Devenish** as senior VP of development.

Devenish was most recently the VP of development for NBC's Peacock Productions and, before that, he served as VP of development at Authentic Entertainment.

He has worked on several factual titles, including Discovery's *Venom Hunters*, National Geographic Channel's *You Can't Lick Your Elbow* and Esquire Network's *Knife Fight*. Devenish will report to Intuitive owners and executive producers Mechelle Collins and Kevin Dill.

► Ryan Seacrest Productions (RSP) has named Emmy-awarded producer **Teri Kennedy** as executive VP of development and original unscripted programming.

In the new position, Kennedy will be tasked with the development, formatting and oversight of the prodco's original unscripted slate while managing the creative and strategic elements from casting through to post-production for the company's new non-fiction series.

Kennedy most recently served as head of current production for Oxygen Media.

► Former Naked Entertainment exec **Tim Hancock** has been appointed to the post of commissioning editor for features and daytime at UK pubcaster Channel 4.

In the new position, Hancock will be responsible for commissioning across primetime features for C4 and its daytime slate, as well as for the network's digital channel More4 and VOD service All 4. Hancock will report to Gill Wilson, head of features, when he joins the network at month's end.

Most recently serving as head of development at FremantleMedia-owned prodco Naked Entertainment, Hancock has produced such programs as *The Naked Choir*, *The Incredible Spice Men* and upcoming series *The Factory*, all for BBC2, as well as *Finding Sarah* for OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network. He also created shorts series *Rich Kids Go Shopping* and *How to Pull* for Channel 4. **DA**



## BEST PRACTICES: E-MAIL ETIQUETTE

BY CHRIS PALMER AND  
SHANNON LAWRENCE

**E**-mail is the preferred form of communication in today's professional environment. As such, we're constantly connected to it through our phones, tablets and computers. How do we manage the constant influx of messages in need of our attention? Here are 10 tips on how to manage your inbox, from organization and message language to etiquette on public use.

**Make e-mail your first task at work.** Check e-mail first thing in the morning at work. This not only allows you to take care of unanswered emails from your off hours, but also prevents your inbox from being a distraction as you continue work. Don't let e-mail control you. Be sure you have time during the day to think creatively without e-mail interruption.

**Answer promptly.** Respond to e-mails in a timely manner, no later than 24 hours after receiving the original message. This is a courtesy to the sender, confirming that you have received their message and have considered their time.

**Keep your inbox clean.** To maximize efficiency, your inbox should be organized and uncluttered. Don't let hundreds and hundreds of messages pile up. Attend to them regularly to prevent being overwhelmed.

**Stick to one topic at a time.** Don't put different topics under one e-mail heading. This may disorganize or confuse the recipient. Describe the topic clearly in the subject line.

**Proofread.** Emails are forms of professional documentation and communication. As such, it is important to review them for errors before sending them out to the intended recipient.

**Be professional.** Be cordial and polite when responding to professional messages. Be concise and clear with your responses. Use appropriate language to the recipient.

**Watch your tone.** Tone matters in an e-mail. Avoid sounding negative or aggressive in your correspondence.

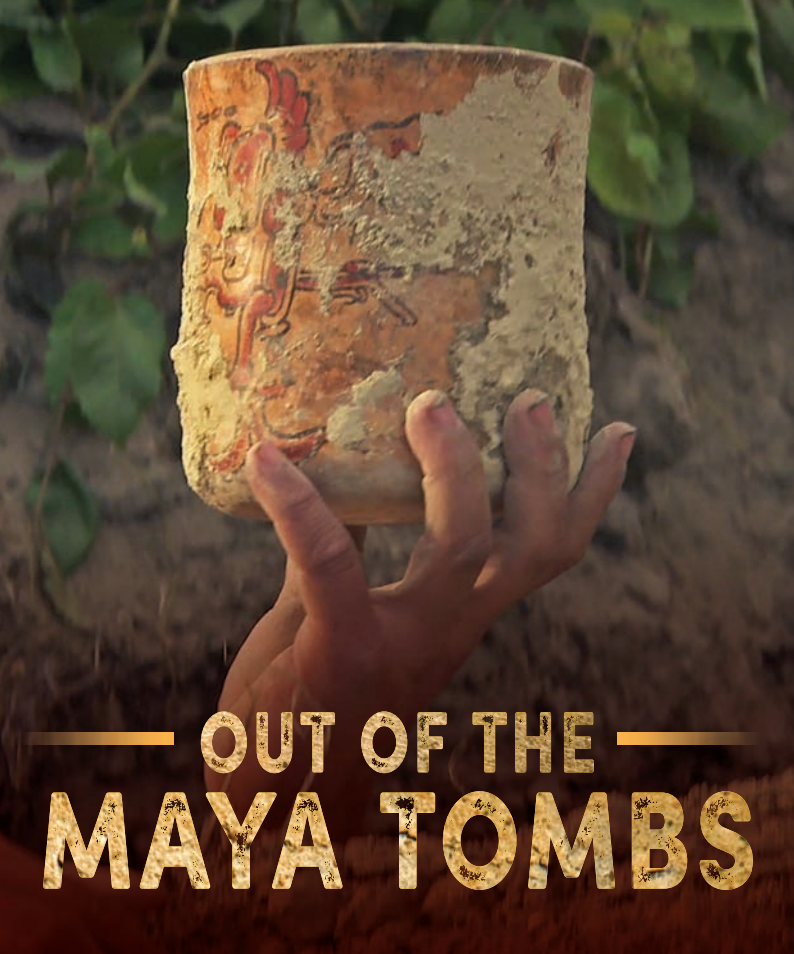
**Leave a calling card.** Provide updated contact information in your emails such as your telephone number, either in a signature line or near the sign-off, so that your correspondent can contact you via other avenues, if they need to.

**Be courteous with group e-mails.** Don't clutter people's inboxes with replies that don't pertain to them. Only respond to those who need to see your message.

**Remember that e-mail is not a group activity.** If you are at a public function or in a meeting, be courteous to those around you and abstain from e-mailing until you return to your desk or to a private space.

Knowing how to manage your e-mail can help make you a more polished and efficient professional. Consider these tips in your own professional life to see if they can prevent e-mail from being an overly stressful aspect of your life.

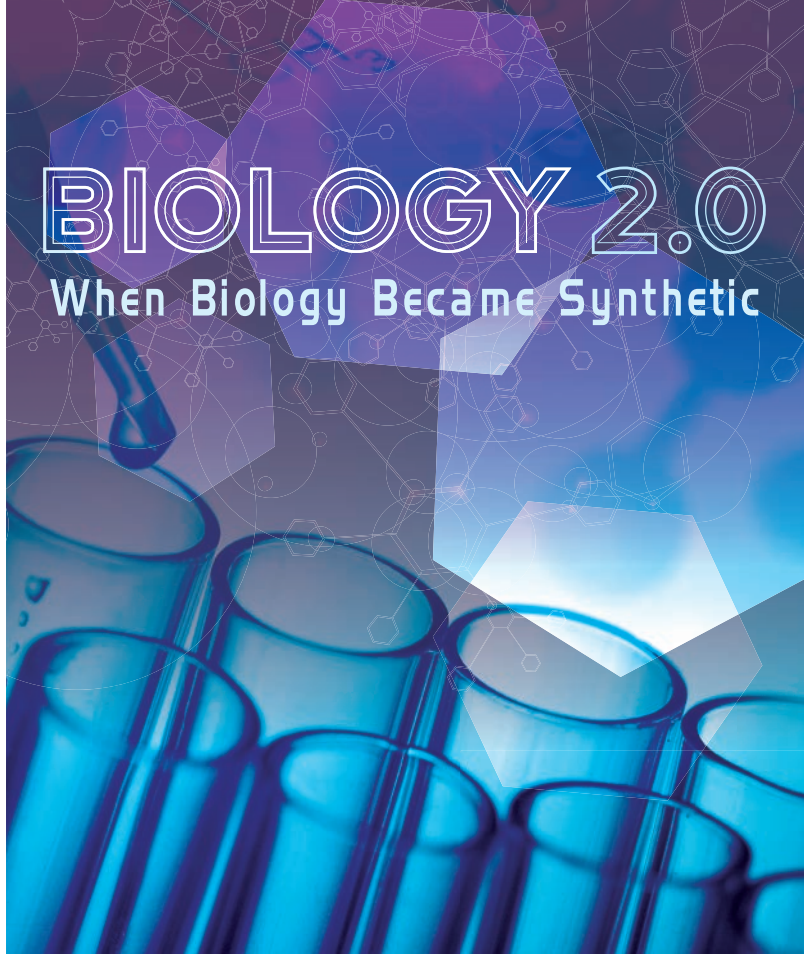
*Professor Chris Palmer is director of American University's Center for Environmental Filmmaking and author of three books, including Confessions of a Wildlife Filmmaker and the newly published Now What, Grad? Your Path to Success After College. Shannon Lawrence is a filmmaker and MFA candidate at American University. •*



# — OUT OF THE — MAYA TOMBS



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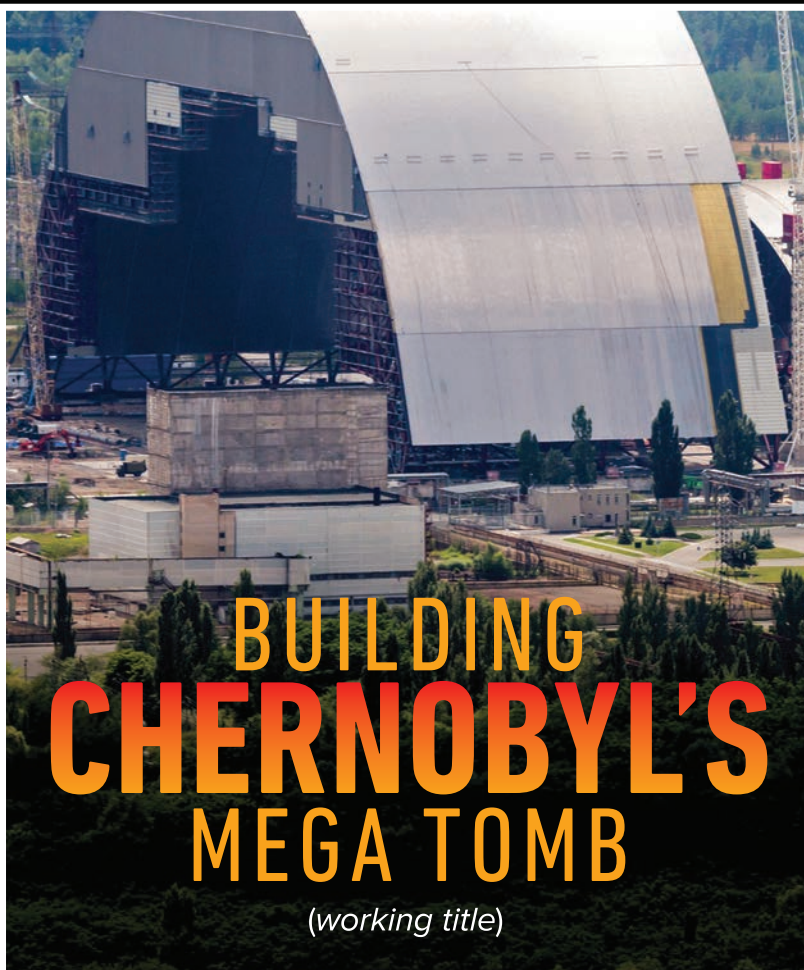
When Biology Became Synthetic

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# COMMAND AND CONTROL



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# ARTWORK

Michał Marczak's *All These Sleepless Nights* follows two friends in Warsaw's after-hours party scene.

**T**wo years ago, director Robert Greene pitched *Kate Plays Christine* to commissioners and funders at pitch forums and in private meetings.

Although the subject matter was not unusual for a doc, his approach was: follow an actor preparing to star in a movie-within-a-movie about the life of Christine Chubbuck, a Florida TV reporter who committed suicide on live television in 1974.

Greene has always been fascinated by the story but did not want to do the standard biopic. Instead, he hoped to understand his own obsession with this disturbing story as well as the impulse that drove Chubbuck to do what she did.

*Kate Plays Christine* follows actor Kate Lyn Sheil as she travels to Sarasota, Florida and eventually acts in staged scenes. By documenting this process, Greene explores "the sometimes unstable boundaries between performance, the authentic self and the storytelling impulse," as he put it in the press notes sent to reporters when the doc had its world premiere at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival.

It was a hit with critics, but Greene's approach was not as popular in the funding stage.

"We had tons of meetings and everyone was interested but in the end, it's still that limit of, 'Is this a lay-up for television?'" he tells *realscreen*. "I had a great meeting and the guy was [then] like, 'Is it going to be *The Jinx* or is it going to be an art film like you've done before?'"

His financing eventually came through a Sundance Institute grant and a contribution from Greek shipping heir and auteur patron Christos V. Konstantakopoulos, whose Faliro House

Productions has backed such projects as Terrence Malick's *Knight of Cups*. Still, Greene does not consider those earlier meetings a waste.

"I met people working in the traditional side of the industry that supported my work and yet writing checks is a different thing," he says.

As docmakers working on films with a social issue focus have succeeded in unlocking new funding from networks, philanthropists and other investors, those with conceptually adventurous projects report feeling devalued.

Raising money for art films has never been a cake walk, but many producers feel it is harder to land financing earlier if a doc cannot demonstrate measurable impact.

Moreover, dwindling broadcast license fees mean commissioning editors cannot afford to greenlight without a rough cut. That point is key for docmakers, who often start shooting years before concerted fundraising begins.

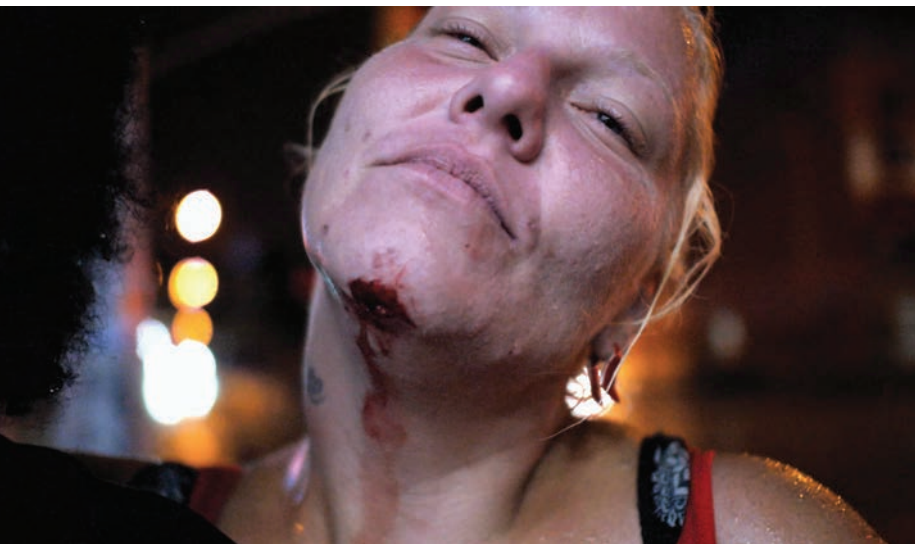
To address this situation, the Sundance Institute, in partnership with non-profit Cinereach, has created the Art of Non-Fiction initiative, which includes a fellowship, resources and workshops for filmmakers interested in inventive artistic practices.

The pilot year is underway with four fellows: Greene, Margaret Brown (*The Order of Myths*) and Omar Mullick and Bassam Tariq (*These Birds Walk*).

"We need to be able to come in earlier and actually support the filmmakers, not just the projects," explains Tabitha Jackson, director of the Sundance Institute's documentary film program. "It's almost like going back to a Renaissance

BY KEVIN RITCHIE

Joshua Oppenheimer's *The Act of Killing* garnered critical praise and decent audiences by pairing difficult subject matter with an artful approach. But what's regarded as "creative non-fiction" still can get stonewalled at the funding stage. Here, directors and funders weigh in on plans to change that.



**Khalik Allah's *Field Niggas* helped the young director secure a grant through BritDoc and Pulse Films' Genesis Fund.**

model of art patronage in that you support a person throughout their career."

When Jackson joined the Sundance Institute in 2014 from Channel 4, she laid out a vision to give cinematic non-fiction more prominence alongside social justice and human rights-focused docs in a keynote talk at DOC NYC. She argued that a cultural shift in the way documentaries are perceived is needed.

To that end, the Art of Non-Fiction is different from other

Sundance fellowships. Participants are not required to have a project and it is invitation-only. Organizers wrote to filmmakers they thought would fit and asked about creative interests in what Jackson calls a "non-application application."

She cites Joshua Oppenheimer's *The Act of Killing* as a game-changer. The doc grossed more than \$485,000 at the U.S. box office and was nominated for an Oscar. It also polarized critics by approaching the state-sponsored mass killings that took place in Indonesia in the mid-1960s through having the perpetrators create a fantasy film based on the murders.

"No one could say that isn't a social issue film, but it's also stunningly bold," says Jackson, noting that Oppenheimer spent seven years working on the doc. "If Joshua thought too hard about funding and whether this was going to be viable, [he] would never [have done] anything. That is a bar to diversity. One of the most powerful things that documentary does is to reflect who we are. If only certain people can tell stories in certain ways because that's the only way to get funded, it undercuts the whole endeavor."

Another company hoping to get more adventurous docs out of development is Pulse Films (*20,000 Days On Earth*). The London-based shop has teamed with non-profit BritDoc on the Genesis Fund, a grant that gives directors with highly original concepts in development £5,000 (US\$7,600) 10 times per year.

The first recipient is Khalik Allah, a photographer-turned-filmmaker who made a splash on the festival circuit last



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year with *Field Niggas*, a doc portrait of Harlem's notorious street corner, 125th and Lexington. The director self-financed the film and posted it online last winter. That's how programmers for the True/False Film Fest saw it.

Critics praised the way Allah used slowed-down footage and out-of-sync audio to portray people society often sweeps under the carpet in startlingly beautiful ways. The True/False screening exposed Allah to doc funders and producers for the first time and he is seizing the moment.

He has since participated in a CPH:DOX lab and is now drumming up financing for his next project, the Jamaica-shot *Black Mother* (working title). He already has a \$20,000 camera grant from Rooftop Films to shoot on 16mm and is using his Genesis grant to cut a trailer.

"Coming off the street, my main thing is remaining in control of the film," he says. "A lot of what I do is off impulse and feeling-based. Trying to delineate that onto a piece of paper is extremely difficult for a director like me. I'm more or less like, 'Yo, just drop me off with a camera in this location and let me find what the story is.' That being said, I did write five-to-seven pages for the Rooftop Films grant."



Jackson

Genesis Fund applicants can be of any nationality, living anywhere and with any level of experience. Grants are not contingent on working with either Pulse or BritDoc upon completion; however, the organizations may make rare coproduction offers. (Pulse is on board for *Black Mother*).

"As a business, we want to be involved in these types of creative endeavors with directors

who see themselves as artists," says Pulse's head of documentaries, Julia Nottingham. "We really value that."

She notes that this year's Sundance Film Festival programmed several artistic docs, including the Pulse-produced *All These Sleepless Nights*. Directed by Michal Marczak, the film follows two friends through Warsaw's after-hours party scene with a

roving, close-up camera rig that gives the doc the intimate feel of narrative drama.

Marczak won a directing prize at Sundance and the doc has had its North American rights acquired by The Orchard, while Kate

*Plays Christine* picked up a writing award at the fest. These wins are perhaps small indications of change, but more exciting for producers was the presence of Amazon and Netflix in Park City.

The companies dropped millions on acquisitions this year. Noting how the streaming services have invested in risk-taking scripted, Nottingham

**"One of the most powerful things documentary does is reflect who we are."**

019

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Robert Greene's *Kate Plays Christine* tells the story of an anchorwoman's on-air suicide via unconventional methods for documentary.



**"I'm much more excited to see someone put forth a rough proposal and say, 'I have this idea and it's not something you've seen before.'"**

wonders if their execs will eventually want documentaries of a similar caliber.

"Are they going to buy those films that five years ago would've been seen as super niche because they didn't have a social issue?" she asks. "Who buys those films, where they get distributed and how they get to audiences will be important. It's going to be interesting to see where creative non-fiction is at in the U.S. in five years."

For non-profit foundation and production company Cinereach, the end goal for backing artful non-fiction films is to support projects that have cultural value. Founded in 2006, the New York-based organization has backed docs such as *Teenage*, *Evolution of a Criminal* and first-time director Steve Loveridge's upcoming film about musician M.I.A.

Cinereach is also providing editorial and financial support for Sundance's Art of Non-Fiction program in hopes of galvanizing a greater community of filmmakers and like-minded funders and festivals such as BritDoc, the Jerome Foundation, Cinema Eye, True/False, Creative Capital, the San Francisco Film Society, the LEF Foundation and the Warhol Foundation.

When considering a film for financing, cofounder and creative director Michael Raisler asks filmmakers, "Why is this film being made now?"

"Oftentimes I find that films are being made simply because they can be," he explains. "That's a limit for me. I'm much more excited to see someone put forth a rough proposal and say, 'I have this idea and it's not something you've seen before.'"

Although Cinereach does not measure social impact, it looks at longer-term cultural impact. Who is talking about a doc and in what context? Is it resonating in high-art circles or on *The Today Show*?

Critical writing is important but Raisler notes the way creative non-fiction is written about – if at all – can hinder a film's success.

"The majority of American publications that do review documentaries are generally reviewing solely based on the content," he says. "There is very rarely a critical discourse about the documentary form. That doesn't help maintain a dynamic funding infrastructure for films like *Leviathan*, for example."

The potential scale of an artistic doc is something Pulse's Julia Nottingham considers when budgeting. She finds every tax credit possible and focuses on funders amenable to creative leeway.

"If we've got a commercial film, we can scale that to a particular budget," she says. "With Khalik, we've budgeted much more on point in regards to how we think we'll take his film to market."

Although she would not expect a pitching forum to yield big commissions for artful docs she sees merit in that arena. It's a chance to educate broadcasters, create awareness and show that audiences exist for this work, however niche they may be.

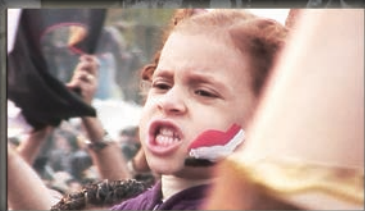
In her DOC NYC keynote, Jackson lamented that a "creeping up" of budgets was making it hard for less experienced filmmakers to break through. More than a year into the job, she believes that "budget creep" is due to producers accounting for actual costs – not what they think funders want to hear.

"One of the things I would love is for us as funders to recognize what a film actually costs if our producers and directors are going to pay themselves," she says.

"Documentary is such a young art form," she adds. "There's still a lot of exploration in how we can tell the stories of our times but we're never going to get there if the focus is always on the end product. In great cinema, the notion of how we say things is more important than what we're saying. We don't often build that into our creative infrastructure." ●

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# MIPTV PICKS 2016

## HOW TO DIE: SIMON'S CHOICE

**Partners:** Minnow Films with the Open University for BBC2, distributed by Zodiac Rights

**Aired:** February, 2016 (BBC) **Length:** 1 x 90 minutes

**Rights available:** Worldwide excluding the UK

British businessman Simon Binner was diagnosed with aggressive motor neurone disease in January 2015, and given two years to live. With the finality of that diagnosis, and the knowledge of the toll the disease would take on both him and his family, Binner made the decision to end his life at a Swiss assisted suicide clinic. This program follows Binner, his family and friends as they come to terms with the impending reality of that choice, providing a personal focus for the many questions that loom large in the right to die debate. "It's one of those dinner party conversations you have," says Binner's wife, Debbie, at one point, "never dreaming that you'd ever actually be having the conversation."

As distributors from around the world set off to Cannes, we at *realscreen* set out each year to make the acquisition process a little less frantic by offering up our picks of programming that merits a closer look. This year's MIPTV Picks range from awe-inspiring natural history and fun factual entertainment to social-issue documentary and several points between. Congratulations to our Best in Show, which wins for its submitting company a pass to the 2017 Realscreen Summit.



## HOW THE RICH LIVE LONGER

**Partners:** ITN Productions for Channel 4; distributed by Orange Smarty

**Aired:** December 2015 (Channel 4) **Length:** 1 x 60 minutes

**Rights available:** Worldwide excluding the UK

Known in the UK as one of the presenters of C4's *Embarrassing Bodies*, Dr. Christian Jessen examines another factor in the health care equation in this one-off: the relationship between wealth and health. Whether it's hanging out in an ice chamber, eating a diet of stale bread at a high-priced clinic or, perhaps on the more moderate end of the spectrum, undergoing DNA testing, Jessen puts his cred (and his credit card) on the line by investigating whether the bizarre and pricey methods just might work, or if they are mere financial flights of fancy.



## TAIGA

**Partners:** Dream Catcher Motion Pictures; distributed by Zed

**Length:** 1 x 52 minutes **Aired:** February 2015 **Rights available:** Worldwide

Set against a backdrop of an evolving society, Hamid Sardar's *Taiga* uses one man's story to frame a larger discussion about the relationship between man and nature. Mongolian nomad Purevjav is a hunter, who has always had great respect for the animals that nourish him and his family, even as some of them prey on the sheep he herds. But, with the promise of a handsome reward, he raises a few wolf cubs to sell them for their pelts – a decision he later sees as a violation of his relationship with the natural world around him.



## THE SECRET LIFE OF THE ZOO

**Partners:** Blast! Films for Channel 4; distributed by Sky Vision ➡ **Aired:** February 2016 (Channel 4)  
**Length:** 6 x 44 minutes ➡ **Rights available:** Worldwide excluding UK

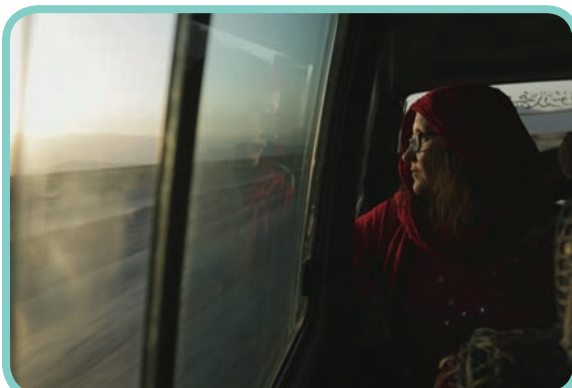
The UK's Chester Zoo is a leading conservation center and is also home to some 20,000 animals from 500 different species. For a period of time, it also played host to close to 100 fixed micro-rigs, as cameras and crews set out to document what happens in a zoo after the customers head home. From a giraffe giving birth to courtship and mating habits, to the relationships the animals have with the humans who care for them, this installment of the *Secret Life of...* franchise gives us another tantalizing look at a captivating and mysterious world.



## WEINER

**Partners:** Motto Pictures; distributed by Dogwoof, NonStop Entertainment for Scandinavia, Sundance Selects and Showtime for North America ➡ **Premiered:** January 2016 (Sundance)  
**Length:** 1 x 96 minutes ➡ **Rights available:** World excluding UK, North America, Scandinavia, Australia/NZ

Airing on U.S. premium cabler Showtime this fall, *Weiner* documents a further fall from grace for politician Anthony Weiner, a former American congressman in a bid for the mayor's office in New York City. Co-directed by the politician's former chief of staff, Josh Kriegman, and Elyse Steinberg, the film follows Weiner as he tries to drag his reputation and his mayoral campaign back onto the rails following the unveiling of another chapter in the embarrassing sexting scandal that led to his earlier resignation from Congress. The film provides an engrossing window into the cutthroat world of political campaigning.



## NATIONAL BIRD

**Partners:** Ten Forward Films, ITVS, NDR; distributed by ro\*co films international  
**Premiered:** February 2016 (Berlinale) ➡ **Length:** 1 x 92 minutes ➡ **Rights available:** All rights outside of North America and Germany/Austria/Switzerland (G-A-S)

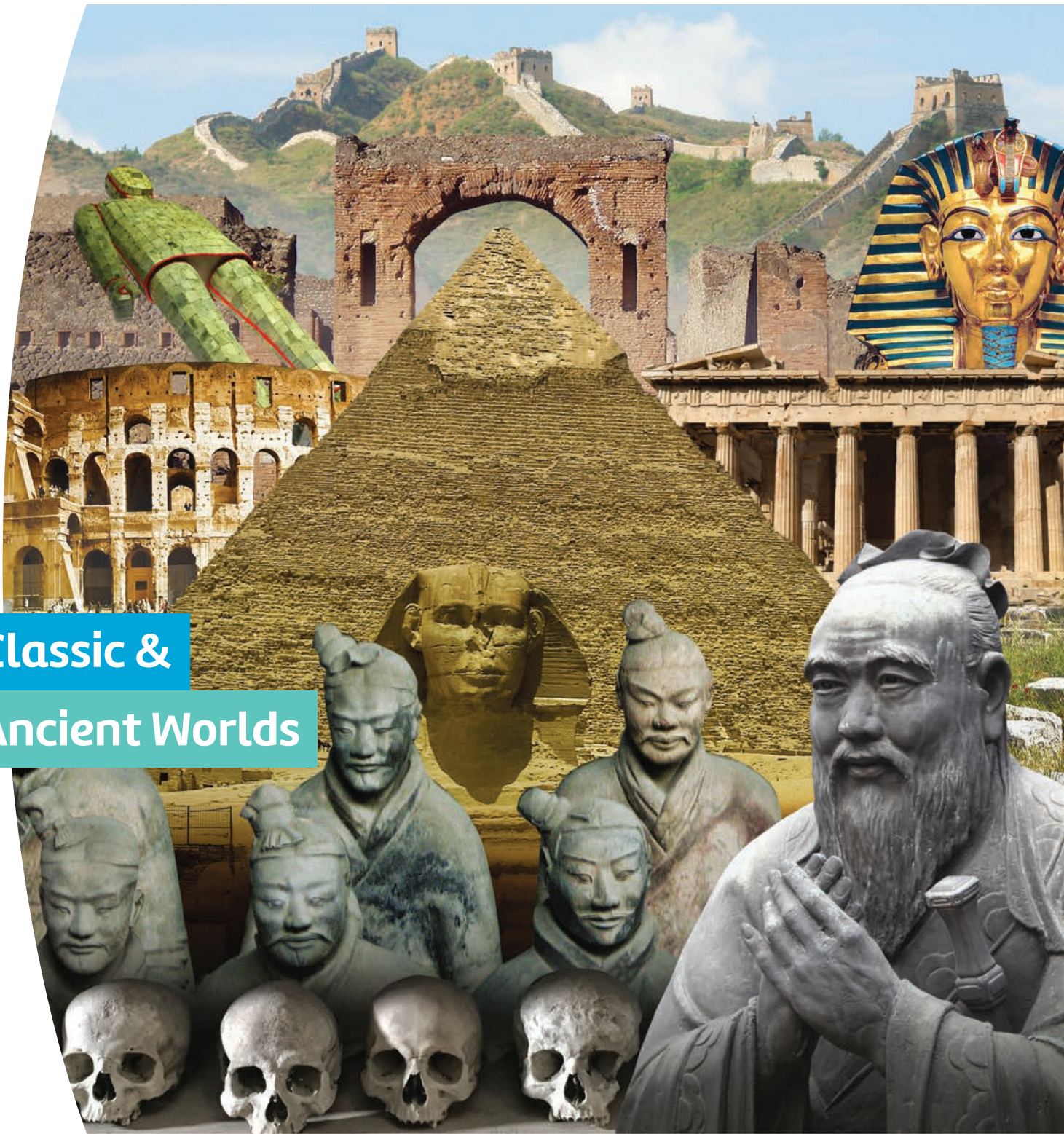
Directed by Sonia Kennebeck, produced by Ines Hofmann Kanna and exec produced by Wim Wenders and Errol Morris, *National Bird* presents the stories of three whistleblowers hoping to place the spotlight on the U.S. government's drone warfare program. In the military arena, the ramifications of being able to kill scores of "the enemy" remotely are just beginning to be seen. Filmed with practically no advance attention drawn to it by its funders, the project brings these three former members of the U.S. Air Force out of the shadows to share the effects that carrying out drone strikes have had on them.



## LOST AND FOUND

**Partners:** Frank Films, Shaw Media Canada, NHK, SBS Australia; distributed by Tricon Films Inc.  
**Aired:** March 2015 (NHK, Japan) ➡ **Length:** 82 minutes ➡ **Rights available:** Worldwide, excluding Canada, Japan, and Australia

The effects of natural disasters such as the Great East Japan Earthquake and its accompanying tsunami last far longer than the days, months and years immediately following, and for many who endure such hardships, the impact is never forgotten. But what if, somehow, some of those who thought they'd lost everything could be reunited with some part of their former lives? This doc follows those who are tracking, collecting and itemizing the debris from the devastating event, and attempting to return cherished items to those whose lives were irrevocably changed by it.



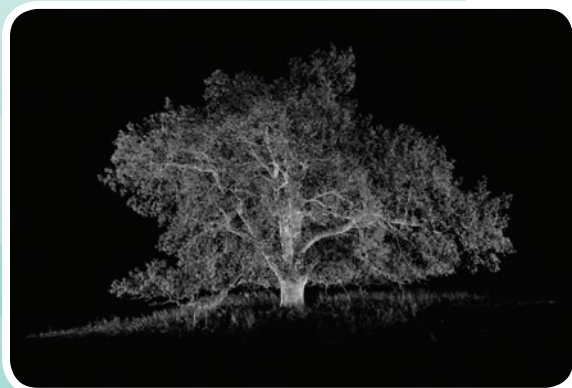
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## OAK TREE: NATURE'S GREATEST SURVIVOR

**Partners:** Furnace Ltd. for BBC; distributed by TVF International ➡ **Length:** 1 x 90 minutes; 2 x 48 minutes  
**Aired:** October 2015 (BBC4) ➡ **Rights available:** Worldwide, excluding the BBC

A rather glowing review from *The Guardian* summed up in its opening paragraph the potential strikes against this nature program: "a feature-length film about a single tree presented by a bearded insect botherer on a channel not a lot of people get down to." Still, the program, which features entomologist George McGavin and a 400-year-old oak tree in Oxfordshire, provides a thoroughly engrossing look at one of the natural world's most resilient characters. Whether it's through Dr. McGavin hoisting himself up the specimen to investigate the scores of creatures and creepy-crawlies that call it home, or state of the art laser scanning that details every nook and four-century-old cranny, no leaf is left unturned in this study of the mighty oak.



## WALKING THE HIMALAYAS

**Partners:** October Films with GroupM Entertainment for Channel 4; distributed by Sky Vision  
**Length:** 5 x 60 minutes ➡ **Premiered:** December 2015 (Channel 4)  
**Rights available:** Worldwide excluding UK and U.S.

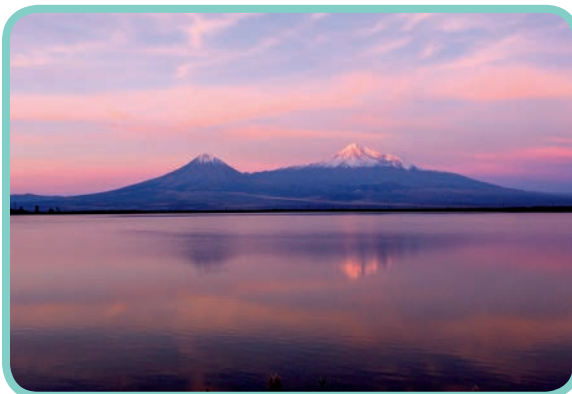
Having "walked the Nile" in a previous special, adventurer and explorer Levison Wood suits up for another major excursion, this time walking the length of the Himalayas. His journey begins in Afghanistan and sees him trek across some 1,700 miles on a journey full of amazing experiences, breathtaking scenery and not a little bit of danger. Snow and ice, altitude sickness and a debilitating car crash are countered by the exquisite beauty, hidden jewels of nature and historical significance of the sites he, and we, discover.



## MY BABY, PSYCHOSIS AND ME

**Partners:** Matchlight for BBC1; distributed by DCD Rights ➡ **Aired:** February 2016 (BBC1)  
**Length:** 1 x 60 minutes ➡ **Rights available:** Worldwide

Thankfully, we now understand more than we did about postpartum depression, and have more ways to potentially treat it. But postpartum psychosis, which can affect around one out of every 500 women who give birth, is still a shadowy area, not often discussed. Paranoia, delusional thoughts and extreme highs and lows are just some of the effects brought on by psychotic episodes that could possibly be experienced by new mothers. With the right treatment, both the mothers and the children can return to their homes after a matter of weeks, but getting that care is a crucial factor in recovery. This program follows two mothers who are undergoing treatment at a specialist psychiatric ward, as well as the team bringing them the care they, and their babies, need.



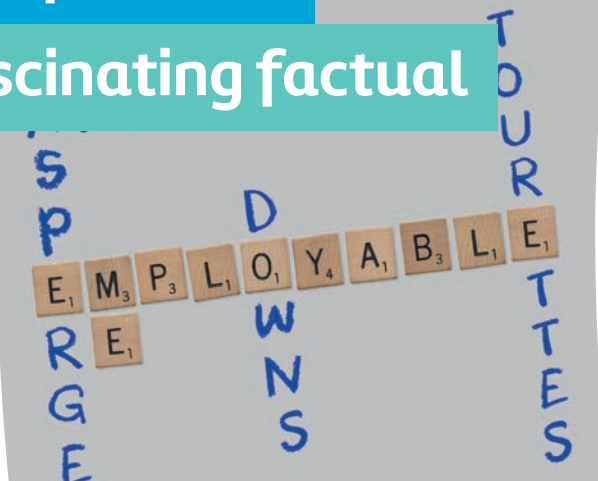
## THE LESSER CAUCASUS

**Partners:** NDR Naturfilm/Doclights for NDR, WDR, Terra Mater, Channel 1 (Russia) and Altayfilm; distributed by ZDF Enterprises ➡ **Length:** 1 x 50 minutes  
**Premiered:** February 2016 (ARD) ➡ **Rights available:** Worldwide outside Germany and Austria

Located in the "no man's land" between Europe and the Orient is this mountainous landscape, home to nomads and cattle breeders who have staked their claim to the rugged terrain through perseverance and respect for the sovereignty of nature. With the foothills of its plateaus extending into three countries – Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia – and the peaks surrounded by Persian forests, the mountain ranges of Kurdistan and Anatolia and two giant bodies of water in the Caspian and Black Seas, the vistas shown in this rare glimpse of the region from an esteemed natural history production team are truly breathtaking.



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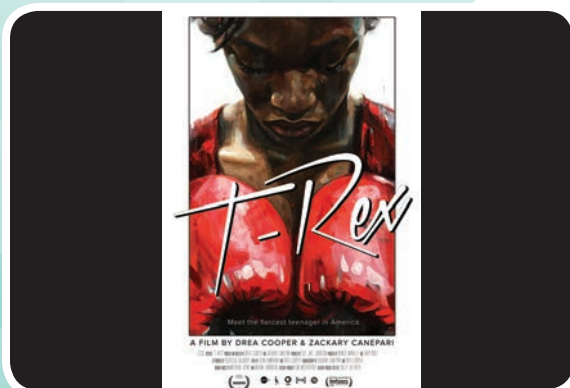
## FASHION SCANDALS

52' - FASHION



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PRESALE



## T-REX

**Partners:** ZCDC and ITVS; distributed by 108 Media ➡ **Length:** 1 x 91 minutes

**Premiered:** March 2015 (SXSW) ➡ **Rights available:** Worldwide, excluding North America

Seventeen-year-old Claressa Shields, called “T-Rex” by friends, wants to be the first American woman to win a gold medal for boxing at the Olympics. Hailing from Flint, Michigan, she becomes the youngest woman, and one of the first, to box in the games during the 2012 London Olympics. With their first feature, co-directors Drea Cooper and Zackary Canepari follow Claressa as she overcomes myriad challenges – ranging from family pressures to clashes with her inner training circle – to achieve her dream.

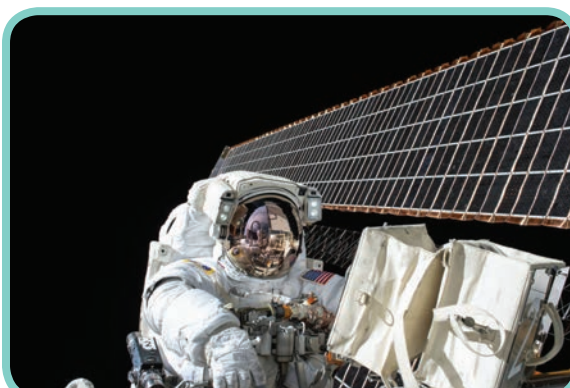


## HITTING HOME

**Partners:** In Films for Australian Broadcasting Corporation; distributed by ABC Commercial

**Length:** 2 x 55 minutes ➡ **Aired:** November 2015 (ABC) ➡ **Rights available:** Worldwide

In 2015, domestic violence once again came to the forefront of media scrutiny through several high-profile cases of abusive behavior making their way to the headlines. But even under the glare of the spotlight, many still have little to no understanding of the underlying issues behind the statistics. In this two-parter, Australian journalist and *Four Corners* presenter Sarah Ferguson dives deep into the domestic violence problem in Australia, accompanying police investigating cases, living in a women’s shelter and having rare access to doctors, prisons, courts and of course, those who have been living under the threat of domestic violence and are taking the steps to change their lives.



## A YEAR IN SPACE

**Partners:** PBS and Time Inc.; distributed by PBS International

**Length:** 2 x 60 minutes ➡ **Aired:** March 2016 (PBS) ➡ **Rights available:** Worldwide excluding U.S.

On March 27, 2015, astronaut Scott Kelly began an unprecedented mission for NASA on board the International Space Station. While his identical twin brother and fellow astronaut Mark Kelly remained on Earth, Scott would spend a year on the space station – an experiment designed to chart the effects of long-duration space flight. With Scott having returned home on March 2 of this year, plummeting to Earth with two Russian astronauts in a Soyuz space capsule after having witnessed some 10,944 sunrises, space enthusiasts around the world can follow his exploits via this two-part special, while learning more about the mental and physical impact of long-duration space travel on the human body.



## NEWTOWN

**Partners:** Mile 22, Transform Films, Cuomo Cole Productions, Artemis Media Ventures; distributed by ro\*co films international ➡ **Length:** 1 x 85 minutes

**Premiered:** January 2016 (Sundance) ➡ **Rights available:** Worldwide outside of North America

Directed by Kim A. Snyder, *Newtown* examines the aftermath of one of the most tragic and horrifying events in recent American history – the killing of 20 children between the ages of six and seven, and six adults, in the 2012 mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. Over the span of close to three years, Snyder follows three of the parents whose lives were torn upside-down by the event, as they grapple with their new realities and share their stories, while also integrating the experiences of others affected by the senseless killings in what is ultimately a story of resilience.

## MIPTV PICKS



### RIGHT FOOTED

**Partners:** Nick Spark Productions; distributed by APT Worldwide **Length:** 1 x 60 minutes

**Premiered:** June 2015 (Mirabile Dictu Film Festival, Vatican City, Rome)

**Rights available:** Worldwide, excluding U.S.

While a birth defect rendered Jessica Cox armless, it hasn't diminished her ability to create an amazing, adventurous and ambitious life for herself. Whether it was through earning her college degree or a Black Belt in Taekwondo, or learning how to drive a car or pilot an airplane, Cox hasn't allowed circumstances beyond her control to define her. This uplifting film documents her achievements while following her over a two-year period as she mentors children and families facing challenges of their own.



### NATURE'S SUPERDADS

**Partners:** MFP; distributed by Zed **Length:** 1 x 52 minutes

**Premiered:** February 2016 **Rights available:** Worldwide

Typically in wildlife films, when it comes to family life in the animal kingdom, we see plenty of shots of mothers tending to their offspring while the fathers prowling the landscape to provide. This documentary looks at several species that share the parenting load a little more equitably. From the bird world to mammals and amphibians, nature offers plenty of examples of dads that pull their domestic weight, and this informative doc provides a playful overview.

030

"The place where ideas become real."

Bruce Cowley  
Creative Head, Digital Channels, Network  
Programming Office, CBC Television

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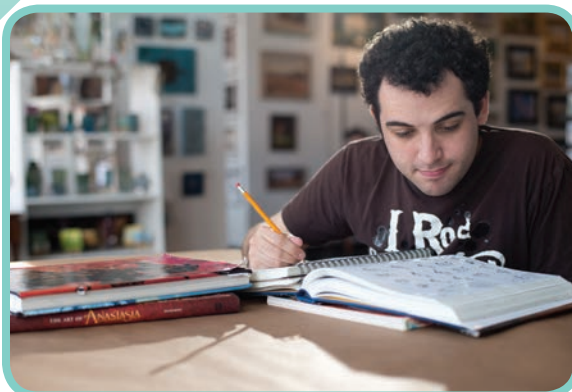
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## NOTES ON BLINDNESS

**Partners:** Archer's Mark in assoc. with Fee Fie Foe Films, 104 Films; coproduced by Agat Films & Cie, ARTE France; supported by Creative England, the BFI, Impact Partners, ARTE France, BBC 'Storyville', Cinereach, Britdoc, *New York Times* and PROCIREP-ANGOA; worldwide sales handled by Cinephil  
**Length:** 87 minutes ➡ **Premiered:** January 2016 (Sundance) ➡ **Rights available:** Worldwide excluding UK, France, Germany

Writer and academic John Hull experienced a steady deterioration of his eyesight over the years which culminated in total blindness in 1983. Compelled to chronicle his experience, he kept a diary on audio cassette over three years, amassing over 16 hours of material – commentary that forms the backbone of this project. Combining cinematic recreations and evocative sound design with traditional documentary elements, the film gives viewers a sense of the mystery inherent in what Hull, who passed away last year during principle photography on the feature, called “a world beyond sight.”



## LIFE, ANIMATED

**Partners:** A&E IndieFilms, Motto Pictures, Roger Ross Williams Productions; distributed in North America by The Orchard, international sales handled by Dogwoof  
**Length:** 1 x 89 minutes ➡ **Premiered:** January 2016 (Sundance)  
**Rights available:** World excluding UK, North America, Scandinavia, Japan, Hong Kong, Australia/NZ

This critically acclaimed feature from Oscar-awarded director Roger Ross Williams (*God Loves Uganda*, *Music By Prudence*) tells the story of Owen Suskind, son of Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ron Suskind and his wife Cornelia. With his autism preventing him from speaking for years, Owen turns to the Disney movies he has memorized to express himself through the characters he identifies with, offering his family a window into his innermost thoughts. In addition to the critical praise, the film grabbed the best directing award in the U.S. competition at Sundance for Williams.



## UNDER FIRE: THE UNTOLD STORY OF PFC. TONY VACCARO

**Partners:** Dog Green Productions for HBO; distributed by Cargo Film & Releasing  
**Length:** 1 x 69 minutes ➡ **Airing:** 2016 (HBO, U.S.) ➡ **Rights available:** Worldwide excl. U.S., Canada, Netherlands, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Moldova, Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria

In 1943, 21 years old and recently drafted, Tony Vaccaro applied to the U.S. Army Signal Corps, with an aim to photograph the war. While told he was too young, he took his Argus camera onto the field with him as he fought with the 83rd Infantry Division, serving as both a combat soldier and a photographer who would snap close to 8,000 photographs of the war as it unfolded around him. Here, Vaccaro returns to the sites and photographs that framed his young life.



## BOY TO MAN

**Partners:** Seven Productions for Travel Channel; distributed by Beyond International  
**Length:** 12 x 60 minutes (series 1 and 2) ➡ **Rights available:** The World excluding Australia, New Zealand, and U.S. including its territories and possessions and the Caribbean

Tim Noonan, adventurer and filmmaker, wants to learn more about the initiation rites that young males undergo to become men in the eyes of various tribes. But rather than observe from a distance, Noonan wants to undergo the rituals and tests himself. From Siberia to Guinea-Bissau and several points between, *Boy to Man* provides a fascinating study into how various cultures define what it means to be a man. •

## CANADA



### CINEFLIX MEDIA

**Headquarters:** Montreal | [www.cineflix.com](http://www.cineflix.com) | **Employees:** 135

**Recent/current titles:** *Property Brothers*, *American Pickers*, *Angry Planet*, *The Quest for Gold*, *Flipping Virgins*, *Food Factory*, *Motives & Murders: Cracking the Case*, *Surviving Evil*, *Nowhere to Hide* season 2

**Upcoming titles:** *American Lawmen*, *Sin City ER*, *Detectives Club: New Orleans*, *Gangland Undercover* season 2, *Property Brothers: Buying + Selling* season 4, *Mayday* season 16

One of Canada's largest producers in the non-fiction arena, Cineflix made more inroads into the U.S. in 2015, via such commissions as the eco-adventure series *Angry Planet* for Pivot; Discovery Life's *Sin City ER*, which follows the action at a Las Vegas hospital; and the fact-based drama *Gangland Undercover* for A&E. Indeed, crime programming continued to pay for the prodco in 2015, with series such as *Detectives Club: New Orleans* for ID and *American Lawmen* for American Heroes Channel. Another genre enjoying an uptick in 2015 was home reno and real estate, and Cineflix had new entries on that front, including *Flipping Virgins* for HGTV, spun off from another Cineflix production, *Property Virgins*. And long-running Cineflix series such as HGTV's *Property Brothers* and History's *American Pickers* continued to perform, with the former landing an Emmy nomination.

In the staffing department, the company bolstered its U.S. team with the hires of Dave Hamilton, ex-Leopard USA, as EVP of development and former Jigsaw Productions exec Dave Snyder as VP of development. In March of this year, the company announced a first-look deal with *Becoming Us* showrunner and EP George Moll. **Barry Walsh**

COMPANY	TITLES	HEAD OFFICE	WEBSITE
Alibi Entertainment	<i>Carnival Eats, The Great Canadian Cookbook</i>	Toronto	<a href="http://www.alibientertainment.ca">www.alibientertainment.ca</a>
Anaid Productions	<i>The Liquidator</i>	Vancouver	<a href="http://www.anaid.com">www.anaid.com</a>
Big Coat Productions	<i>Love It or List It</i>	Toronto	<a href="http://www.bigcoatproductions.com">www.bigcoatproductions.com</a>
Force Four Entertainment (an eOne company)	<i>First Dates Canada, Keeping Canada Alive</i>	Vancouver	<a href="http://www.forcefour.com">www.forcefour.com</a>
Frantic Films	<i>Still Standing; Buy It, Fix It, Sell It</i>	Winnipeg	<a href="http://www.franticfilms.com">www.franticfilms.com</a>
Great Pacific Media (a Thunderbird company)	<i>Highway Thru Hell, Game of Homes</i>	Vancouver	<a href="http://www.greatpacific.tv">www.greatpacific.tv</a>
Insight Productions	<i>Big Brother Canada, The Amazing Race Canada</i>	Toronto	<a href="http://www.insighttv.com">www.insighttv.com</a>

# THE GLOBAL 100

## 2016

**T**his year, *realscreen's* Global 100 celebrates its 10th anniversary. Intended to celebrate innovation, business acumen and of course, great content, the list first appeared in the April/May issue of 2006. As with every year since, it was compiled with input from the industry itself, including producers extolling the virtues of their peers, network executives sharing their thoughts on trusted partners, and various other stakeholders.

Of course, the non-fiction and unscripted industry of 2016 is a far different animal than it was a decade ago. With the explosion in popularity of reality TV in the U.S. and abroad, the list's appearance changed often, and indeed, with more networks programming non-fiction and unscripted fare, the amount of high-rating programming to factor into consideration also grew exponentially. Now, with new platforms moving aggressively into the space, there is even more great work out there, and naturally, more prodcos worthy of noting. But our intent on providing a snapshot or reflection of the past year in global factual content remains intact. Some of the names listed this year are familiar faces and have been on the list since its inception. Some frequent G100 prodcos might be absent from this year's list, with other companies earning a spot for the first time. As then-editor Brendan Christie wrote in his introduction to the 2007 Global 100 list, "Creative churn drives the film and television industries. It's what keeps viewers coming back for more."

And now, onto our annual look at who did the work you loved in the past year.

Barry Walsh  
Editor



## CREAM PRODUCTIONS

**Headquarters:** Toronto | [www.creamproductions.ca](http://www.creamproductions.ca)

**Number of hours produced in 2015:** 65+ | **Employees:** 25 **Recent/current titles:** *Wild Things with Dominic Monaghan*, *Fear Thy Neighbor*, *The Weapon Hunter* | **Upcoming titles:** *Weapon Hunter* season 2

With the retirement of co-founder Christopher Rowley in 2014, former EVP of production Kate Harrison was upped to president and partner in the Toronto-based company. Cream has continued a successful run of *Wild Things with Dominic Monaghan*, with the third season airing this year on OLN in Canada, Travel Channel in the U.S. and Channel 5 in the UK.

Meanwhile, true crime series *Fear Thy Neighbor* returned to ID for a second season which completed in July, and *The Weapon Hunter*, following the exploits of history buff and restoration expert Paul Shull (pictured), came to Smithsonian Channel. The company also signed distribution deals with Proper Rights for *Justice for MLK: The Hunt for James Earl Ray*, which originally aired on American Heroes Channel, and a multi-year distribution output deal with Blue Ant International.

Cream also welcomed Jennifer Harkness, formerly with Jumpwire Media and Temple Street Productions, as its senior VP of sales and development. Based in LA, she's tasked with amping up the prodco's business in the U.S., and supporting the company's push into the digital and VR spaces. **BW**

COMPANY	TITLES	HEAD OFFICE	WEBSITE
Media Headquarters Film & Television	<i>Canada's Smartest Person</i>	Toronto	<a href="http://www.mediahq.net">www.mediahq.net</a>
Omnifilm Entertainment	<i>Jade Fever</i>	Vancouver	<a href="http://www.omnifilm.com">www.omnifilm.com</a>
Paperny Entertainment (an eOne company)	<i>Timber Kings</i> , <i>Cold Water Cowboys</i>	Vancouver	<a href="http://www.papernyentertainment.com">www.papernyentertainment.com</a>
Proper Television	<i>MasterChef Canada</i> , <i>Canada's Worst Driver</i>	Toronto	<a href="http://www.propertelevision.com">www.propertelevision.com</a>
Temple Street Productions	<i>Say Yes to the Dress Canada</i> , <i>The Next Step</i>	Toronto	<a href="http://www.templestreetproductions.com">www.templestreetproductions.com</a>

## UNITED STATES

### BUNIM/MURRAY PRODUCTIONS (A BANIJAY GROUP COMPANY)

**Headquarters:** Van Nuys, California  
[www.bunim-murray.com](http://www.bunim-murray.com)

**Number of hours produced in 2015:** Approx. 175

**Number of employees:** 500+

**Recent programs:** *I Am Cait*, *Born This Way*, *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*, *Dash Dolls*, *Total Divas*, *Bad Girls Club*, *Project Runway*, *The Challenge*, *The Real World*, *Stewarts and Hamiltons*, *Fix My Mom*, *Valerie's Home Cooking*, *Love Thy Sister*

**Upcoming programs:** Season two of *I Am Cait* and season 31 of *The Real World*

The reality powerhouse had a big year with management changes, the media attention surrounding Caitlyn Jenner's *I Am Cait* series and several franchises entering double-digit seasons.

As the speculation around *Keeping Up With the Kardashians* star Jenner's impending transgender revelation reached a boil last spring – resulting in a highly-rated Diane Sawyer interview on ABC and a *Vanity Fair* cover – Bunim/Murray was undergoing its own transition behind the scenes. Cofounder Jonathan Murray announced he would step down to focus on producing documentaries, with Gil Goldschein taking over as chairman and CEO.

On the programming front, the Banijay-owned shop continued spinning off the seemingly unstoppable *Keeping Up* franchise with *I Am Cait* and *Dash Dolls*. Kardashian-related programming now comprises a third of E!'s schedule,



according to a presentation by Keith Friedenberg, EVP, Global Insights Group for WME and IMG, during the 2016 Realscreen Summit.

Meanwhile, Oxygen's *Bad Girls Club* entered season 14, *The Challenge* hit season 27 on MTV, season 14 of *Project Runway* debuted on Lifetime, E! aired season 11 of *Keeping Up*, and MTV entered season 31 of the show that created reality TV as we know it, *The Real World* (pictured).

Bunim/Murray also branched out with its first commission for A&E: the docuseries *Born This Way*, about seven young adults living with Down syndrome. The series has been renewed for a second season. The company also received its first commission from the Food Network with *Valerie's Home Cooking*, starring actor Valerie Bertinelli.

**Kevin Ritchie**



## HALF YARD PRODUCTIONS (A RED ARROW COMPANY)

**Headquarters:** Bethesda, MD | [www.halfyardproductions.com](http://www.halfyardproductions.com)

**Number of hours produced in 2015:** 100+ | **Employees:** 300

**Recent/current titles:** *The Last Alaskans*, *Say Yes to the Dress*, *Brides Gone Styled*, *Santas in the Barn*

**Upcoming titles:** *Iron and Fire*, *The Last Alaskans* season 2, *Say Yes to the Prom*

The unscripted genre doesn't generally receive a lot of love from television critics, and having a docureality series premiere to critical acclaim is a relative rarity. But the response to the premiere of Animal Planet's *The Last Alaskans*, produced by Half Yard, was favorable across the board, with *Vulture* naming it "one of the best surprises of the summer," the *Washington Post*'s Hank Stuever calling it "a reality show with a heart as big as its subject," and *The New York Times* praising it as an "affecting" series that defies expectations. But it wasn't only the critics who loved it – audiences grew steadily over its run and in its first season, it clocked in enough viewers to be the network's second-most-watched series in 2015, behind *River Monsters*, and a second season is set for April.

The company behind the long-running TLC hit *Say Yes to the Dress* brought bridal makeover show *Brides Gone Styled* to the network, and also scored a commission from Channel 4 for a British take on bridal programming, *All Hail the Veil*. This year will see *Iron and Fire* debut on History in April, and two *Say Yes* spin-offs for TLC, including *Say Yes to the Prom* in May.

On the personnel side, Half Yard began the year by bringing in John Jones and Nikki Taub as exec producers, and promoted Deniz Bicioglu, Janice Mezzetti and Cameron Young in March. **BW**

COMPANY	TITLES	HEAD OFFICE	WEBSITE
3 Ball Entertainment	<i>Bar Rescue</i> , <i>Catch a Contractor</i>	Redondo Beach	<a href="http://www.3ballentertainment.com">www.3ballentertainment.com</a>
44 Blue Productions	<i>Wahlburgers</i> , <i>Hollywood Medium</i> , <i>Nightwatch</i>	Studio City, CA	<a href="http://www.44blue.com">www.44blue.com</a>
495 Productions (a FremantleMedia company)	<i>Party Down South</i> , <i>Blue Collar Millionaires</i>	Burbank	<a href="http://www.495productions.com">www.495productions.com</a>
51 Minds (an Endemol Shine Group company)	<i>Sisterhood of Hip Hop</i> ; <i>Below Deck</i>	North Hollywood	<a href="http://www.51minds.com">www.51minds.com</a>
All3Media America (an All3Media company)	<i>Chrisley Knows Best</i> (with Maverick TV)	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.all3a.com">www.all3a.com</a>
Asylum Entertainment (a Legendary company)	<i>Breakthrough</i> (with Imagine Entertainment)	Encino, CA	<a href="http://www.asylument.com">www.asylument.com</a>
Atlas Media Corp.	<i>Hotel Impossible</i> , <i>In the Line of Fire</i>	New York City	<a href="http://www.atlasmedia.tv">www.atlasmedia.tv</a>
Authentic Entertainment (an Endemol Shine Group company)	<i>Flipping Out</i> , <i>Knife Fight</i>	Burbank	<a href="http://www.authentic.tv">www.authentic.tv</a>
BBC Worldwide Productions	<i>Dancing with the Stars</i> , <i>Life Below Zero</i>	Santa Monica	<a href="http://www.bbcworldwide.com">www.bbcworldwide.com</a>
Electus (an IAC company)	<i>Running Wild With Bear Grylls</i>	New York City	<a href="http://www.electus.com">www.electus.com</a>
Evolution Media	<i>The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills</i> , <i>Botched!</i>	Burbank	<a href="http://www.evolutionusa.com">www.evolutionusa.com</a>
Firelight Media	<i>The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution</i>	New York City	<a href="http://www.firelightmedia.tv">www.firelightmedia.tv</a>
FremantleMedia North America (an RTL Group company)	<i>American Idol</i> (with 19 Entertainment), <i>America's Got Talent</i>	Burbank	<a href="http://www.fremantlemedia.com">www.fremantlemedia.com</a>
GRB Entertainment	<i>Sex Sent Me to the ER</i> , <i>Intervention</i>	Sherman Oaks, CA	<a href="http://www.grbtv.com">www.grbtv.com</a>
Gurney Productions (an ITV company)	<i>Duck Dynasty</i> ; <i>Tiny House Builders</i>	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.gurneyproductions.com">www.gurneyproductions.com</a>
Herzog & Co.	<i>The Sixties</i> , <i>The Seventies</i> (with Playtone)	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.herzogcompany.com">www.herzogcompany.com</a>



## HIGH NOON ENTERTAINMENT

**Headquarters:** Denver, CO | [www.highnoontv.com](http://www.highnoontv.com)

**Number of hours produced in 2015:** 89

**Employees:** Annual average of 225

**Recent/current titles:** *Fixer Upper*, *Cake Boss*, *Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet*, *Mexicanicos*, *Xtreme Waterparks*

**Upcoming titles:** *Good Bones*, *Penn Vet*, *Sweet 15: Quinceañera*

Just a year shy of its 20th anniversary, the ITV Studios-owned High Noon is flying high. TLC debuted its *Sweet 15: Quinceañera* series in November; *Fixer Upper* is driving record ratings for HGTV, which in March premiered the producer's mother-daughter reno series, *Good Bones*; and the company in January strengthened its casting muscle with a dedicated division. CEO Jim Berger says High Noon – now equipped with a 10-person development team – has been lucky in crossing so many genres, but says the producer treats the property space as a "specialty craft" that's no different from a survival show. "You're one-part producer and you're one-part home renovator," he remarks.

The *Emergency Vets* producer is now also dipping its toes back in the vet space with a second season of Animal Planet's *Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet* in the works, as well as the premiere of a university-focused *Penn Vet* series set to bow on the net later this year. Berger's next order of business for the producer – which has a strong track record with cable nets – is to venture into the broadcast space for the first time. The exec hints that several shiny-floor formats with High Noon's "ITV brethren" are in development.

**Manori Ravindran**

## JIGSAW PRODUCTIONS (A CONTENT MEDIA COMPANY)

**Headquarters:** New York | [www.jigsawprods.com](http://www.jigsawprods.com) | **Number of hours produced in 2015:** 30.5

**Employees:** 11 full-time, about 70 freelancers

**Recent programs:** *Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief*, *The New Yorker Presents*, *Cooked*, *Steve Jobs: The Man in the Machine* | **Upcoming programs:** *Death Row Stories* season 3, *Zero Days*, *Parched*

Helmed by prolific doc maker Alex Gibney, Jigsaw Productions is becoming a familiar presence on the festival circuit. Just this year, Sundance premiered two episodes of the producer's flagship series for Amazon, *The New Yorker Presents*, and also screened an installment of its docuseries *The 4%: Film's Gender Problem*, which debuted on Epix in March. Meanwhile, Gibney's cyber warfare doc, *Zero Days*, bowed in February's Berlin International Film Festival, alongside *Cooked* (pictured), a four-part Netflix series with author Michael Pollan.

For some time, the prodco was best known for such docs as the Oscar-winning *Taxi to the Dark Side* and *Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief* – which in 2015 prompted the controversial church to take out a full-page ad in *The New York Times* condemning the film and Gibney – but it has also been making impressive strides in the TV space since its partnership with Content Media in 2012. Jigsaw is currently at work on an eight-part, true-crime serialized doc series for A&E, and will this year launch the four-part miniseries *Parched* on National Geographic Channel. The next piece of the puzzle for the inexhaustible prodco will be making steps into the scripted space, starting with a “death row” drama series with HBO and actor Laura Dern that Gibney will direct and produce. **MR**



## PILGRIM MEDIA GROUP (A LIONSGATE COMPANY)

**Headquarters:** North Hollywood, CA | [www.pilgrimstudios.com](http://www.pilgrimstudios.com)

**Employees:** 1500 | **Number of hours in 2015:** 400

**Recent/current titles:** *Fast 'N' Loud*, *Street Outlaws*, *Bring It!*, *Someone's Gotta Do It*, *Kocktails with Khloe*

**Upcoming titles:** *Ghost Hunters* season 11, *Wicked Tuna* season 5  
In late 2015, content studio Lionsgate entered into a “strategic partnership” (reportedly a majority stake) in what was then known as Pilgrim Studios, one of the last major “true indies” on the U.S. unscripted production landscape. Founded in 1997 by Craig Piligian, the prodco, known for testosterone-fueled content such as Discovery's *Fast 'n' Loud*, as well as the perennial Syfy favorite *Ghost Hunters*, has spent the last few years branching out into different genres. *Bring It!*, a dance docuseries for Lifetime, had a big season two premiere with 1.8 million viewers and spawned the spin-off, *Step It Up! Welcome to Sweetie Pie's* and *Raising Whitley* continued to perform for OWN, as did *Wicked Tuna*, headed to its fifth season on National Geographic Channel.

In 2015, the prodco delivered Discovery's *Cuban Chrome*, the first U.S. TV series shot entirely on location in Cuba, and launched a digital platform, 1620 Media. Now rebranded as Pilgrim Media Group, the company's latest hit, *Kocktails with Khloe* for FYI, has taken them into another new direction – that of the Kardashian-hosted chat show. **BW**

COMPANY	TITLES	HEAD OFFICE	WEBSITE
Hit the Ground Running Films	<i>The Jinx: The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst</i>	New York City	n/a
Indigo Films	<i>Wives With Knives</i> , <i>Unlikely Animal Friends</i>	San Rafael, CA	<a href="http://www.indigofilms.com">www.indigofilms.com</a>
ITV Entertainment	<i>The First 48</i> , <i>Rich Kids of Beverly Hills</i>	Los Angeles, New York	<a href="http://www.itvstudios.com/us/home">www.itvstudios.com/us/home</a>
Jupiter Entertainment (a Sky company)	<i>Snapped</i> , <i>Fatal Attraction</i>	Knoxville, TN	<a href="http://www.jupiterent.com">www.jupiterent.com</a>
Karga Seven Pictures (a Red Arrow company)	<i>Booze Traveler</i> , <i>Hunting Hitler</i>	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.karga7.com">www.karga7.com</a>
Kinetic Content (a Red Arrow company)	<i>Married at First Sight</i> , <i>Little Women LA</i>	Santa Monica	<a href="http://www.kineticcontent.com">www.kineticcontent.com</a>
Leftfield Pictures (a Leftfield Entertainment company)	<i>Pawn Stars</i> , <i>Alone</i>	New York	<a href="http://www.leftfieldpictures.com">www.leftfieldpictures.com</a>
Lighthearted Entertainment	<i>Are You the One?</i> , <i>Dating Naked</i>	Burbank	<a href="http://www.lighthearted.com">www.lighthearted.com</a>
Loud TV (a Leftfield Entertainment company)	<i>Tiny House Nation</i> , <i>Food Porn</i>	New York	<a href="http://www.loudtelevision.com">www.loudtelevision.com</a>
Magical Elves (a Tinopolis company)	<i>Top Chef</i> , <i>Cold Justice</i>	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.magicalelves.com">www.magicalelves.com</a>
Magilla Entertainment	<i>Diesel Brothers</i> , <i>Beachfront Bargain Hunt</i>	New York City	<a href="http://www.magilla.tv">www.magilla.tv</a>
Matador Content	<i>Lip Sync Battle</i> , <i>Banksy Does New York</i>	New York City	<a href="http://www.matadorcontent.com">www.matadorcontent.com</a>
Mission Control Media	<i>Face Off</i> , <i>Hollywood Game Night</i>	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.missioncontrolmedia.net">www.missioncontrolmedia.net</a>
Monami Entertainment	<i>Love &amp; Hip Hop</i> (with Eastern TV)	New York City	<a href="http://www.monamient.com">www.monamient.com</a>
Optomen (an All3Media company)	<i>Mysteries at the Castle</i>	New York City	<a href="http://www.optomen.com">www.optomen.com</a>
Original Media (an Endemol Shine Group company)	<i>Swamp People</i> , <i>Comic Book Men</i>	New York City	<a href="http://www.originalmedia.com">www.originalmedia.com</a>
Original Productions (a FremantleMedia company)	<i>Storage Wars</i> , <i>Deadliest Catch</i> , <i>Bering Sea Gold</i>	Burbank	<a href="http://www.originalprods.com">www.originalprods.com</a>

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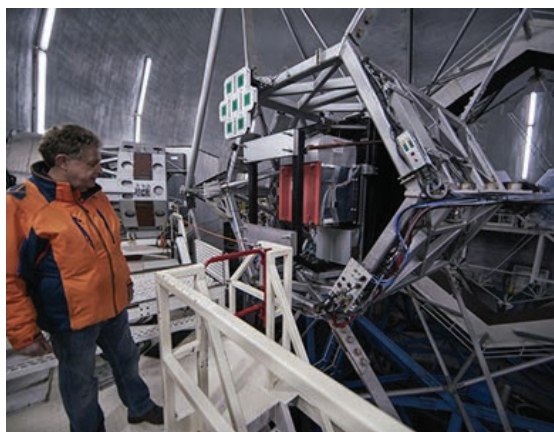
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## A SMITH & CO. PRODUCTIONS (A TINOPOLIS COMPANY)

**Headquarters:** Toluca Lake, CA | [www.asmithco.com](http://www.asmithco.com)

**Number of hours in 2015:** 212

**Employees:** 182 full-time; 600-800 freelance

**Recent/current titles:** *American Ninja Warrior*, *Team Ninja Warrior*, *Hell's Kitchen*, *Ellen's Design Challenge*

**Upcoming titles:** *Spartan Race*, *Basketball Moms*

2015 saw the company behind such early reality hits as *Paradise Hotel* celebrate its 15th anniversary. To celebrate, A. Smith & Co. brought new hits to networks while keeping its high-rating franchises, such as the Gordon Ramsay-fronted *Hell's Kitchen* (the prodco was also behind Ramsay's other long-running Fox hit, *Kitchen Nightmares*, which wrapped in 2014) and NBC's *American Ninja Warrior* (pictured).

The latter, a strong summertime performer for the Peacock, spawned a spin-off of sorts for NBCU Cable's Esquire Network. *Team Ninja Warrior*, which debuted in January of this year, had the most-watched premiere of any series on the network to date, with 1.3 million tuning in across all its airings.

Last year also saw the debut of *Ellen's Design Challenge*, exec produced by talk show host and comedian Ellen DeGeneres and produced in association with Telepictures, on HGTV. The design competition proved to be one of the highest-rated series in HGTV history, and a second season premiered this past January.

On the way for 2016 is the sports competition series *Spartan Race* for NBC and a new wrestling format via a partnership with Nashville-based Global Force Wrestling. **BW**



## RADICAL MEDIA

**Headquarters:** New York, NY | [www.radicalmedia.com](http://www.radicalmedia.com)

**Number of hours produced in 2015:** approximately 80 | **Employees:** approximately 200

**Recent/current titles:** *What Happened*, *Miss Simone?*, *Whitey: The United States of America vs. James J. Bulger*

**Upcoming titles:** *Hamilton's America*, *Tony Robbins: I Am Not Your Guru*

2015 was another strong year for the New York-headquartered outfit which brought forth the Oscar-nominated *What Happened*, *Miss Simone?* – Liz Garbus's portrait on the iconic singer and civil rights activist Nina Simone; the return of AOL's Emmy-nominated sleeper hit *Park Bench with Steve Buscemi*; and Discovery Channel's *Telescope*, director Nathaniel Kahn's in-depth account of the people and technologies responsible for creating the Webb Telescope, which broke the network's Sunday primetime viewership records with an audience of 703,000 this past February.

Forging ahead, Radical's *Tony Robbins: I Am Not Your Guru* from Joe Berlinger – in which unprecedented access was granted into Robbins' annual "Date with Destiny" seminar – will premiere on Netflix in July, while *Mars*, a copro with Imagine Entertainment using scripted and unscripted elements, is expected later this year on National Geographic Channel. **Daniele Alcinii**

COMPANY	TITLES	HEAD OFFICE	WEBSITE
Orion Entertainment (Now Dorsey Pictures, a Red Arrow company)	<i>Building Alaska</i> ; <i>Tiny House</i> , <i>Big Living</i>	Denver, CO	<a href="http://www.dorseypictures.tv">www.dorseypictures.tv</a>
part2 pictures	<i>This is Life with Lisa Ling</i> , <i>Belief</i>	Brooklyn	<a href="http://www.part2pictures.com">www.part2pictures.com</a>
Profiles Television	<i>The Amazing Race</i>	El Segundo	<a href="http://www.profiles-television.com">www.profiles-television.com</a>
Prometheus Entertainment	<i>The Curse of Oak Island</i> , <i>Kendra on Top</i>	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.prometheusentertainment.com">www.prometheusentertainment.com</a>
Relativity Television (now Critical Content)	<i>Catfish</i> , <i>Car Matchmaker</i>	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.criticalcontent.com">www.criticalcontent.com</a>
Renegade83	<i>Naked and Afraid XL</i>	Sherman Oaks, CA	<a href="http://www.renegade83.com">www.renegade83.com</a>
RIVR Media	<i>Escaping Polygamy</i> , <i>Fat Guys in the Woods</i>	Knoxville, TN	<a href="http://www.rivr.com">www.rivr.com</a>
Ryan Seacrest Productions	<i>Shahs of Sunset</i> , <i>Keeping Up with the Kardashians</i> (with Bunim/Murray Productions)	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.ryanseacrest.com">www.ryanseacrest.com</a>
Sharp Entertainment (a Core Media Group company)	<i>Hack My Life</i> (with True Entertainment), <i>90 Day Fiance</i>	New York City	<a href="http://www.sharpentertainment.com">www.sharpentertainment.com</a>
Shed Media U.S. (a Time Warner company)	<i>Real Housewives of NYC</i> , <i>Who Do You Think You Are?</i>	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.shedmediaus.com">www.shedmediaus.com</a>
Sirens Media (a Leftfield Entertainment company)	<i>Killing Fields</i> , <i>Real Housewives of New Jersey</i>	New York City	<a href="http://www.sirensmedia.com">www.sirensmedia.com</a>
T Group Productions	<i>Mystery Dinners</i> , <i>Storage Hunters UK</i>	Santa Monica	<a href="http://www.tgroupproductions.com">www.tgroupproductions.com</a>
Thinkfactory Media (an ITV company)	<i>Marriage Boot Camp: Reality Stars</i>	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.thinkfactorymedia.com">www.thinkfactorymedia.com</a>
Tremendous! Entertainment	<i>Bizarre Foods with Andrew Zimmern</i>	Eden Prairie, MN	<a href="http://www.tremendousinc.com">www.tremendousinc.com</a>
True Entertainment (an Endemol Shine Group company)	<i>Real Housewives of Atlanta</i> ; <i>Vanity Fair Confidential</i>	New York, LA	<a href="http://www.trueent.net">www.trueent.net</a>
United Artists Media Group (an MGM company)	<i>Shark Tank</i> , <i>Survivor</i>	Los Angeles	<a href="http://www.hearst.com">www.hearst.com</a>
World of Wonder	<i>RuPaul's Drag Race</i> , <i>Million Dollar Listing</i>	Hollywood	<a href="http://www.worldofwonder.net">www.worldofwonder.net</a>
Zero Point Zero Productions	<i>Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown</i> ; <i>The Hunt with John Walsh</i>	New York	<a href="http://www.zeropointzero.com">www.zeropointzero.com</a>

# UNITED KINGDOM



## KEO FILMS

**Headquarters:** London | [www.keofilms.com](http://www.keofilms.com)

**Number of hours produced in 2015:** 34+

**Number of employees:** 45 full-time

**Recent/current titles:** *Excluded*, *The Romanians are Coming*, *Hugh's War on Waste*, *The Enforcers*, *Skint* season 3

**Upcoming titles:** *Exodus: Breaking Into Europe*, *Year Zero*

The London-based producer's 2015 output spanned a variety of genres, from ob-doc and lifestyle to factual and survival, but continued to be united by ethical and socially-minded themes.

Chef-turned-activist Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall of Keo's *River Cottage* franchise challenged supermarkets to reduce waste in *Hugh's War On Waste*, while Channel 4's *Skint* – about people in the town of Grimsby who live on long-term unemployment benefits – entered season three.

Other social issue-focused series included BBC3's *Excluded: Kicked Out of School*, which looked at what happens after kids are expelled from school, and *The Romanians Are Coming* (pictured), a doc about migrant Romanians in Britain. Meanwhile, Keo globetrotted with adventurer Ed Stafford to investigate natural mysteries for the DNI series, *Ed Stafford Into the Unknown*.

As it enters its 20th year, the company has two big buzzy projects lined up for 2016: the three-part *Exodus: Breaking Into Europe* for BBC and Canal+ will chronicle the journey of 70 migrants attempting to enter the UK and other European countries; and the Scotland-shot reality competition *Year Zero* for Channel 4 will follow 20 contestants as they build a life from scratch in an isolated locale. **KR**

COMPANY	TITLES	HEAD OFFICE	WEBSITE
Arrow Media	<i>Sherpa</i> , <i>See No Evil</i> (with Saloon Media)	London	<a href="http://www.arrowmedia.com">www.arrowmedia.com</a>
Blast! Films	<i>The Night Bus</i> , <i>The Supervet</i>	London	<a href="http://www.blastfilms.co.uk">www.blastfilms.co.uk</a>
Films of Record (a Zinc Media company)	<i>The Murder Detectives</i> , <i>Charlie Hebdo: Three Days That Shook Paris</i>	London	<a href="http://www.filmsofrecord.com">www.filmsofrecord.com</a>
The Garden (an ITV company)	<i>24 Hours in Police Custody</i> , <i>10,000 BC</i>	London	<a href="http://www.thegardenproductions.tv">www.thegardenproductions.tv</a>
Icon Films	<i>River Monsters</i> , <i>Britain's Medieval Vampires</i>	Bristol	<a href="http://www.iconfilms.co.uk">www.iconfilms.co.uk</a>
Lion Television (an All3Media company)	<i>China: Treasures of the Jade Empire</i> , <i>Kew On a Plate</i>	London	<a href="http://www.liontv.com">www.liontv.com</a>
Love Productions (a Sky company)	<i>Benefits Street</i> , <i>The Great British Bake Off</i>	London	<a href="http://www.loveproductions.co.uk">www.loveproductions.co.uk</a>
Mentorn Media (a Tinopolis company)	<i>Angry, White and Proud</i> , <i>Great British Benefits Hotel</i>	London	<a href="http://www.mentorn.tv">www.mentorn.tv</a>
Nutopia	<i>Britain's Biggest Adventures with Bear Grylls</i>	London, Washington	<a href="http://www.nutopia.com">www.nutopia.com</a>
October Films	<i>Walking the Nile</i> , <i>Outrageous Acts of Science</i>	London	<a href="http://www.octoberfilms.co.uk">www.octoberfilms.co.uk</a>
On the Corner	<i>Amy</i> , <i>Ronaldo</i>	London	<a href="http://www.onthecorner.tv">www.onthecorner.tv</a>
Raw TV (a Discovery Communications company)	<i>Gold Rush</i> , <i>Teens</i>	London	<a href="http://www.raw.co.uk">www.raw.co.uk</a>
Shine TV (a Shine Group company)	<i>The Island with Bear Grylls</i> , <i>MasterChef</i>	London	<a href="http://www.shine.co.uk">www.shine.co.uk</a>
Studio Lambert (an All3Media company)	<i>Gogglebox</i> , <i>Undercover Boss</i>	London	<a href="http://www.studiolambert.com">www.studiolambert.com</a>
Swan Films	<i>Muslim Drag Queens</i> , <i>Grayson Perry's Dream House</i>	London	<a href="http://www.swanfilms.tv">www.swanfilms.tv</a>
Thames (a FremantleMedia UK company)	<i>X Factor</i> , <i>Britain's Got Talent</i>	London	<a href="http://www.talkbackthames.tv">www.talkbackthames.tv</a>
Twofour Broadcast (an ITV company)	<i>The Jump</i> , <i>Educating Cardiff</i>	London, Plymouth	<a href="http://www.twofour.co.uk">www.twofour.co.uk</a>
Wall to Wall (A Warner Bros. Television Productions UK company)	<i>The Voice UK</i> , <i>Child Genius</i>	London	<a href="http://www.walltowall.co.uk">www.walltowall.co.uk</a>



## MINNOW FILMS

**Headquarters:** London | [www.minnowfilms.co.uk](http://www.minnowfilms.co.uk)

**Number of hours produced in 2015:** 18

**Employees:** 10, with 35+ freelancers on productions

**Recent/current titles:** *SAS: Who Dares Wins*; *Breaking Into Britain: The Lorry Jumpers*; *The Detectives*

**Upcoming titles:** *Abused* (w/t), *Spies* (w/t), *Lagos to London* (w/t) and second seasons of *SAS: Who Dares Wins* and *The Detectives*

At a time when studios across the globe were rushing to develop series within the true crime genre, London-based indie Minnow Films quietly put together one of the BBC's most successful series in 2015. The three-part docuseries *The Detectives*, which pulled in an average of 2.02 million viewers for the UK pubcaster last May, follows a set of Manchester detectives specializing in sexual offenses as they investigate disgraced radio DJ Ray Teret, who was accused of offenses against schoolchildren throughout the 1960s and 1970s, and later sentenced to 25 years in prison for a series of rapes and indecent assaults against underage girls. The program also offered unprecedented access into myriad investigations in the Greater Manchester area, including child exploitation, domestic violence and rape.

Founded by BAFTA-winning director Morgan Matthews in 2006, Minnow has established a reputation of delivering such high-end documentaries as the BAFTA- and RTS-winning *The Fallen*; BAFTA-nominated *Scenes from a Teenage Killing*; celebrated Afghanistan series *Fighting on the Frontline*; the assisted suicide obs-doc *How to Die: Simon's Choice*, which received "Best in Show" honors in *realscreen's* MIPTV Picks; and the critically acclaimed survival series *SAS: Who Dares Wins* for Channel 4, which offers insight into the physically and psychologically demanding military entrance process of the British Army's Special Air Service (SAS).

The studio is currently in production on Olly Lambert's 90-minute doc *Abused* (w/t) for BBC1, about child abuse in the UK and the cultural impact of the Jimmy Savile scandal, as well as the 5 x 60-minute *Spies* (w/t) and the hour-long film *Lagos to London* (w/t), both for Channel 4. **DA**

## RDF TELEVISION (A BANIJAY GROUP COMPANY)

**Headquarters:** London | [www.rdftelevision.com](http://www.rdftelevision.com)

**Number of hours produced in 2015:** 295

**Employees:** 30 permanent

**Recent/current titles:** *The Secret Life of Four-Year-Olds*, *Eat Well for Less*, *Tipping Point*

**Upcoming titles:** *100 Year Old Drivers*, *Undressed*, *Eat Well for Less* season 3

What happens when you set up a fixed-rig camera outfit in a nursery housing a group of four-year-olds? Approximately 3.5 million Channel 4 viewers wanted to know, and tuned in to RDF Television's *The Secret Life of Four-Year-Olds*, making it the broadcaster's most successful factual program of the past five years. With an educational neuroscientist and a developmental psychologist also watching the goings-on, the program combined valuable takeaway with a steady stream of cute. The show's success garnered a series order as well as spin-offs for the five- and six-year-old set.

The prodco also scored with *Eat Well for Less*, with an average audience of 5.3 million tuning into the first series, and the order for season two doubling the original. The success of the series spawned more budget-conscious fare for the BBC from RDF, including *Shop Well for Less*.

Looking forward, the prodco, under managing director Jim Allen, has another series of *Eat Well* on the way, while its entertainment label, Fizz, will take a crack at racy Italian format *Undressed* for TLC. **BW**





## TRUE VISION FILMS

**Headquarters:** London | [www.truevisiontv.com](http://www.truevisiontv.com)

**Recent/current titles:** *My Son the Jihadi*, *Raining in My Heart*, *No Place to Call Home*, *Behind Closed Doors*

Founded by the husband and wife team of producer Brian Woods and docmaker Deborah Shipley, True Vision is, with its onus on documentary one-offs, something of an anomaly in the current television production landscape. But in the UK, its name is synonymous with hard-hitting, thought-provoking programs that bring social issues into sharper focus. In 2015, those included *Raining in My Heart* for ITV1, which followed three children undergoing experimental cancer treatment at Great Ormond Street Hospital; *No Place to Call Home* for BBC1, which documented the stories of two families caught in the thick of London's housing crisis; and *My Son the Jihadi* (pictured), which examines the impact a young man's radicalization has on his mother and younger brother. The latter is up for an RTS award for best single documentary – an honor the prodco has received often with past work.

Another unique facet of the company is its dedication to facilitating engagement with their films' subject matter and sometimes, subjects. The company established its Aletheia Foundation to channel contributions from viewers to participants in True Vision films, in cases where there were no existing charities in place willing or able to accept such donations.

Sadly, in late 2015, Deborah Shipley passed away following a long battle with cancer, at the age of 60. In a statement, Woods called her the company's "moral compass," while the BBC's Charlotte Moore said, "She was a remarkable woman and I feel lucky to have known her." **BW**

## INTERNATIONAL

### TALPA MEDIA (AN ITV COMPANY)

**Headquarters:** Laren, The Netherlands | [www.talpa.tv](http://www.talpa.tv)

**Recent/current titles:** *The Voice*, *The Wishing Tree*, *The Winner Takes It All*

**Upcoming titles:** *The Voice UK*, *Cannonball*

In March of last year, ITV confirmed yet another big production outfit acquisition, with this one being a doozy – Dutch format powerhouse Talpa Media. Founded by John de Mol, the shop is behind global singing competition *The Voice*, an entertainment juggernaut that many cite as the last huge hit to emerge from unscripted television. The acquisition – the largest of ITV's recent purchases with an initial payment of US\$531.68 million (£355 million) – could come in at a maximum total of approximately £781 million (or approximately \$1.17 billion), contingent on Talpa delivering "significant profit growth" over an eight-year period, and de Mol remaining with the business during that time.

*The Voice* ignited a media storm in the UK in 2015 with the news that it would be leaving the BBC, its home for five seasons, for ITV. The UK commercial broadcaster signed a three-year deal for it, with ITV Studios set to produce the new version beginning in 2017, and former producer Wall to Wall providing ongoing consultancy.

The format house unveiled *Wishing Tree*, in which young children hang "wishes" on a tree to help someone in need, at MIPCOM. The feel-good format, into its second season in the Netherlands, has scored deals in Belgium and Greece. **BW**

COMPANY	TITLES	HEAD OFFICE	WEBSITE
Beach House Pictures	<i>China from Above</i> (with NHNZ), <i>Wild City</i>	Singapore	<a href="http://www.beachhousepictures.com">www.beachhousepictures.com</a>
Beyond Productions	<i>MythBusters</i>	Sydney	<a href="http://www.beyond.com.au">www.beyond.com.au</a>
Endemol (an Endemol Shine Group company)	<i>Big Brother</i>	Amsterdam	<a href="http://www.endemol.com">www.endemol.com</a>
Gedeon Programmes	<i>Chambord: The Castle, The King and the Architect</i> ; <i>Une fleur dans le grand Nord</i>	Paris	<a href="http://www.gedeonprogrammes.com">www.gedeonprogrammes.com</a>
Off the Fence	<i>Destination Wild</i> ; <i>Supercars: The Million Pound Motors</i>	Amsterdam	<a href="http://www.offthefence.com">www.offthefence.com</a>

## HONORABLE MENTIONS

COMPANY	TITLES	HEAD OFFICE	WEBSITE
Boardwalk Pictures	<i>Chef's Table</i>	Santa Monica	<a href="http://boardwalkpictures.wix.com/boardwalkpictures">boardwalkpictures.wix.com/boardwalkpictures</a>
Cordell Jigsaw Zapruder	<i>Go Back to Where You Came From</i>	Chippendale, NSW	<a href="http://www.cjz.com.au">www.cjz.com.au</a>
Left/Right (A Red Arrow company)	<i>Mob Wives</i>	New York	<a href="http://www.leftright.tv">www.leftright.tv</a>
Park Slope	<i>Alaskan Bush People</i>	Brooklyn, NY	<a href="http://www.parkslope.tv">www.parkslope.tv</a>
Peacock Productions (an NBCU company)	<i>Hate in America</i>	New York	<a href="http://www.peacockproductions.tv">www.peacockproductions.tv</a>
Warrior Poets	<i>Morgan Spurlock Inside Man</i>	New York	<a href="http://www.warrior-poets.com">www.warrior-poets.com</a> •

# ALFRED HABER

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Alfred Haber, Inc., Alfred Haber Distribution, Inc., and Alfred Haber Television, Inc., now celebrating 48 years of business, together form the world's largest distributor of U.S. network annual event programming and are major independent distributors of primetime series and specials, including unscripted reality, crime and investigation, clip shows, pop science, music events, and films. For more information about the ALFRED HABER companies, please visit [www.alfredhaber.com](http://www.alfredhaber.com).



### WICKED TUNA - NatGeo (10 x 60') Genre: Reality

See how it all started! It's the first season of the captivating, smash hit NatGeo series about a special breed of fishermen who face incredible dangers and unprecedented challenges to hook the elusive, and lucrative, Bluefin tuna. (Free TV only)

### GHOST HUNTERS - Syfy (219 x 60') Genre: Reality

The world's most popular unscripted paranormal series is the frighteningly successful show featuring real life ghost-hunting experts exploring unexplained haunts and searching for the truth.



### MOST SHOCKING - truTV (89 x 60') Genre: Reality

Breathtaking 'caught-on-camera' reality series about the heart-pounding world of law enforcement features shocking, never-before-seen, action-packed crime footage. It's "good-against-bad" at its very best!

### YOU CAN'T LICK YOUR ELBOW - NatGeo (6 x 30') Genre: Reality

It's a fascinating look at the most complex piece of machinery in the universe: the human body! Cutting-edge CGI and engaging, easy-to-understand narratives reveal the strange, amazing, and often unbelievable things the body does to deal with daily life.

### WORLD POKER TOUR - Travel Channel/ FSN (89 x 60') Genre: Reality Series

The phenomenal primetime reality series that single-handedly turned poker into America's most compelling new television spectator sport. When you add World Poker Tour's sixteen cameras, a "Millionaire" style set, a live audience, and play-by-play analysis, poker becomes as exciting to television viewers as it is to the players.

# passion DISTRIBUTION

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### Robot Wars (6 x 60') also available as a Format

*Robot Wars* is a national knockout competition to find the toughest, most advanced fighting robots in the country. In this fast paced format, competing teams of amateur robot designers build robots to fight to the death in a bulletproof arena.

Overseen by the host of the show and a panel of judges the competitors robots battle against each other using powerful weapons including pneumatic hammers, blades, flame throwers and pick axes. Also up against the competitors are fearsome and charismatic house robots whose purpose is to ambush and destroy. In each timed round the winning robot is the one which disables its adversary, traps it in a pit or feeds it to the house robots!

A Mentorn Scotland, SJP Media and BBC production for BBC2



### Deadliest Pest Down Under (20 x 30')

*Deadliest Pests Down Under* follows a group of brave pest controllers, as they take a challenge of spending a punishing summer season "Down Under". There they face a lethal spiders, snakes and crocs with hilarious and shocking consequences.

A Popkorn TV production for UKTV



### The Evolution of Us (2 x 60')

An epic science special exploring how genetics have underpinned the whole of human evolution and could play an even greater role in determining where evolution will take us next. Featuring spectacular time-lapse cinematography, ultra-high speed filming and lavish CG imagery.

A Pioneer Productions production for KBS and RMC



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#### Forensics: The Science Behind the Truth

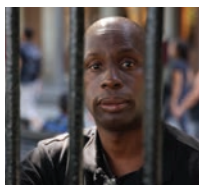
(HD 6 x 1 hr) South Pacific Pictures for Prime, New Zealand  
Follow the real life crime scene investigators using science as a secret weapon to uncover the what, when, where, how and who of complex cases.

#### Employable Me

(HD 3 x 1 hr) Optomen for BBC Two, UK  
Powerful series following the lives of people with neurological conditions as they hunt for jobs that fit their unique abilities.

#### The Innocence Network

(4 x 1 hr) Pernel Media - France  
Major new true crime series with unprecedented access to The Innocence Network, a global group working to exonerate the unjustly convicted and reform the criminal justice system.



ENTERTAINMENT

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#### Executives Attending:

Rita Carbone Fleury - Worldwide Sales - Women & Family

#### My Baby's Having a Baby - NEW at MIPTV - Documentary (10 x 1 hour)

In this perspective shifting series, we meet women who have joined the "Granny Club" much sooner than expected when their teenage daughters - their babies - have babies. Tensions arise as mothers and daughters deal with clashing parenting styles, financial constraints, and uncertain futures. Will the challenge of bringing up babies bring these families together? Or will the frustrations and disappointment pull them apart forever?

#### Worst to First - NEW at MIPTV - Unscripted Renovation (12 x 1 hour)

Every family has a favourite neighbourhood. That one area where they would love to find their "forever home" but can't quite afford it - until now. Talented and tenacious Mickey and Sebastian (brothers-in-law, business partners, and best friends) are the fun loving duo who will help these motivated families find the WORST house in the BEST neighbourhood and transform it into a home that is FIRST in their hearts.



#### Masters of Flip - Unscripted Real Estate Reality -

NEW Episodes (26 x 1 hour)  
Dynamic super couple Kortney and Dave take on the challenge of transforming their rundown real estate investments and turning them into stunning & sellable family homes! Working with limited timelines and budgets, this real life husband and wife team make their refreshingly positive outlook the driving force behind their projects. Despite the ever present "renovation frustration" - they remain upbeat and kind to contractors, trades people and most importantly to each other!



#### Buying the View - Real Estate Lifestyle (26 x 30 minutes)

Every wonder what a million dollars (or two! or three!) can buy you? Follow home buyers to the spectacular skylines of New York and Toronto, or up to the luxurious lake front properties of Muskoka, through to the awe-inspiring mountain views of Whistler and the posh oceanfront condos of Miami & Vancouver, as they seek their perfect home with a perfect view.



#### Cheer Squad - Documentary (10 x 1 hour)

Watch and cheer on as you take a behind the scenes look at the super charged lives of the reigning World Champion Cheer Sharks. These elite athletes, face grueling training sessions, painful injuries and the demands of their not-so-ordinary lives as they compete for their third consecutive championship and world domination in one of the fastest growing female sports in the world.



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COME VISIT US AT OUR MIPTV STAND (P-1.A51)



#### GUN RUNNERS

(90 MIN)  
Hoping to provide a better future for their families, two North Kenyan warriors transform their lives by trading in their rifles for sneakers and becoming professional marathon runners. Told entirely by its central characters, Gun Runners is the American Dream, Kenyan-style.



#### THINGS ARAB MEN SAY

(55 MIN)  
Eight men of Arab descent meet regularly at a barber shop to discuss universal concepts like home, identity, and success. Sometimes hilarious, sometimes sad, this doc reveals different facets of a group that's often painted with the same brush.



#### ZIMBELISM

(52 MIN)  
American-Canadian photographer George Zimbel has been taking pictures for 70 years. He discusses his photo shoots with Marilyn, Kennedy and Truman, the state of photography in the post-film era, and his epic copyright battle with his beloved New York Times.



#### BLIND VAYSHA

(8 MIN)  
Vaysha is not like other little girls. Her left eye sees only the past; her right, only the future. Blinded by what was, and tormented by what will be, she remains trapped between two irreconcilable realities.

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**I**t's been more than two decades since former NFL player O.J. Simpson was acquitted for the 1994 murders of his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and her friend, Ronald Goldman, but the media-dubbed "trial of the century" is living up to the moniker.

Timed with the 20th anniversary of the criminal trial verdict, A + E Networks-owned nets LMN and A&E in fall 2015 aired the specials *The Secret Tapes of the O.J. Case: The Untold Story* and *O.J. Speaks: The Hidden Tapes*. Meanwhile, the Sundance Film Festival in January hosted the world premiere of Ezra Edelman's 7.5-hour documentary *O.J.: Made in America*, which was later picked up by ESPN Films. In February, FX debuted its wildly popular drama series *American Crime Story: The People vs. O.J. Simpson*.

And then, in an almost *Jinx*-like turn, Los Angeles police in early March revealed detectives were investigating a knife reportedly found buried on Simpson's former property years ago.

The case is far from what may typically be thought of as "history," and its corresponding programming reflects a strong appetite among North American audiences for modern historical fare – events from the past 20 to 30 years viewers can still remember from the news, or perhaps their youth. They're not necessarily the historical watersheds in school textbooks, but incidents experienced first-hand.

Recent examples include the National Geographic special *Challenger Disaster: Lost Tapes*, on the Space Shuttle Challenger's ill-fated 1986 flight, as well as the net's upcoming documentary *LA 92*, on the Los Angeles riots over the arrest and beating of Rodney King. Elsewhere, History has launched its 'Breaking History' programming strand, featuring *Alcatraz: Search for the Truth*, a special on the iconic San Francisco prison; and the recent *History Now* digital-first series, highlighting current events.

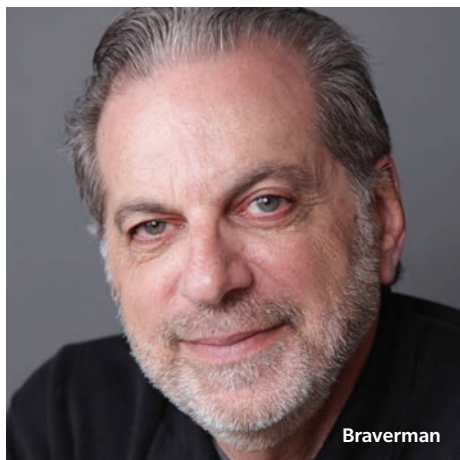
Laura Fleury, the senior VP at LMN who programmed A + E Networks' two Simpson specials, reasons that audiences are more interested in contemporary events because they're growing accustomed to unscripted programming taking deeper dives into relevant topics, and are eager for more information on events that happened in their lifetimes.

BY MANORI RAVINDRAN

# FIRST-HAND HISTORY

With major anniversary programming on the way for recent news-making events, producers and networks are digging deeper to uncover the modern history stories that might have been overlooked in their original telling.

The 20th anniversary of the O.J. Simpson criminal trial verdict has spawned several non-fiction projects.



Braverman



Fleury



Cabana



Chinn

**“We’ve got to deliver something deeper, while also having a real set of first-person perspectives that are telling a comprehensive story.”**

“The 20th anniversary [of the Simpson case] falls at a time when viewers are very compelled towards digging more deeply into the granular level of cases, whether it’s *Serial*, *The Jinx* or *Making a Murderer*,” Fleury tells *realscreen*.

“Twenty years later, that’s enough time to be able to re-examine the case and have people speak more candidly, and there are a lot of people who thought he was innocent then, who don’t think he’s innocent now,” the exec says of Simpson, who was acquitted in a criminal trial, but then found responsible for the deaths in a civil trial.

But the impetus for programming these specials, says Fleury, is the introduction of new information.

A&E, for example, doesn’t focus on historical events unless there is a contemporary angle – something more substantial than an anniversary – and a

fresh perspective. As such, LMN and A&E boarded the two specials from ABS Productions – exec produced by Stephen Auerbach, Chuck Braverman, and Lawrence Schiller – because they offered a trove of new material on the case.

LMN’s two-hour *The Secret Tapes of the O.J. Case* is focused on “unpeeling the onion” of Simpson’s personality through recordings of him speaking, including a rare seven-minute recording made before the theatrical Bronco chase. Meanwhile, the Tom Jennings-produced *O.J. Speaks: The Hidden Tapes* for A&E was crafted from video footage from the civil deposition – of particular importance as Simpson never testified in the criminal trial.

“I was sitting in the office interviewing Dan Petrocelli about the civil case, which he was the attorney for,” recalls Braverman about *O.J. Speaks*. “And he said, ‘Well, you realize this was the first time O.J. Simpson had to testify under oath,’ and my mind started spinning and I asked, ‘Was there any audio taken?’ and he said, ‘No, there was no audio, but there were video tapes.’ Long story short, we were able to get access to 100 hours which nobody else had ever gotten access to.”

Fleury adds that when tackling a relatively current story, networks can’t merely program what viewers could get from the news. “We’ve got to deliver something deeper, [while] also having a real set of first-person perspectives on it that are actually telling a comprehensive story,” she advises.

British producer Simon Chinn, co-founder of UK- and U.S.-based indie Lightbox Entertainment, is in a similar position with the tentatively titled documentary *LA 92* for National Geographic Channel, directed by *Undefeated* helmers Dan Lindsay and TJ Martin.

First announced ahead of Sundance, the two-hour film revisits the six-day riots that began in South Central Los Angeles when four police officers caught on camera beating an unarmed African-American man, Rodney King, following a high-speed chase in 1991 were acquitted of any wrongdoing. The acquittals

resulted in mass protests, looting, fires and the blocking of freeway traffic.

"We were thinking very much about recent significant historical events that might be a story that hadn't been told in some time, maybe never, but by telling them now in a particular way, with the benefit of hindsight, we might somehow shed light on something that's in the zeitgeist at the moment," says Chinn, pointing out the racial polarization in the U.S., recently evoked by the Michael Brown shooting in Ferguson, Missouri.

"This is a riot that basically erupted – to be slightly reductive about this – as a result of a piece of home movie footage and it struck us quite quickly that this might be the first modern riot that was sort of captured in some way on film," he continues.

Chinn produced the Oscar-winning docs *Man on Wire* and *Searching for Sugar Man*. He set up Lightbox in 2013 with his cousin, Emmy-winning producer Jonathan Chinn, who has lived in LA for a number of years and remembers the riots.

"We hope to tell a different story that perhaps people weren't aware of at the time because the story was covered in a very particular way by a particular kind of people – by news agencies that were on the ground that perhaps had limited access because, frankly, it was dangerous," says Chinn. "They were covering stories from the air or from safe parts of the city. Perhaps there were aspects of the story that the [journalists] simply weren't interested in."

Paul Cabana, executive VP and head of programming for History and H2, says the brand has been taking a different tack in its modern history coverage, most notably through the 'Breaking History' strand, which assigns "new information to iconic topics."

While some audiences might assume the net has a mandate to cover more traditionally historic events, Cabana says

**"Experiences become memory, which becomes nostalgia, which naturally becomes history."**

he is trying to tap into a spectrum of programming, meaning that History is prepping a "big special" around the 15th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks that promises "untold stories," but also following Europe's refugee crisis and the U.S. presidential election through its multi-platform *History Now* series, launched in February. "It became an effort of creating a platform where we could highlight some of these stories that could

only be experienced, documented and shared now. We knew that if we not only curated stories but also created a platform for them, what we would ultimately create is this living, breathing time capsule," says Cabana, adding that each episode is three to four minutes in length and accessible

through a YouTube channel, as well as on Facebook and Instagram.

The exec has a couple of theories on the appetite for modern history. He wasn't a history buff growing up, he assures, but the older he gets, the more he sees personal experiences overlapping with events that are, in retrospect, pivotal.

"The fact that the LA Riots were 25 years ago, or the fact that the Challenger disaster was 30 years ago, and the fact that the 1984 Olympics was a turning point in the Cold War, it's weird because you can remember exactly where you were for all those things. Experiences become memory, which becomes nostalgia, which just naturally becomes history." •

Scientist Sheyna Gifford and her work on a Mars simulator is featured in History's multi-platform *History Now* series.



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Canada

Multimedia company RYOT made waves with the Oscar-nominated short *Body Team 12* in 2015, and its founders are determined to find new ways to connect content to action.

BY DANIELE ALCINII

LA-based RYOT teamed with Vulcan Productions on the Oscar-nominated short *Body Team 12*.

## ACTIONTEAM

The recent Ebola outbreak has centered on the West African nations of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, where it was first recorded in December 2013. The hardest hit regions have experienced significant disruptions and a casualty rate of nearly 40%. As of February 17, a total of 28,638 suspected cases and 11,315 deaths have been reported, according to the World Health Organization.

As news of the outbreak began to spread, David Darg, co-founder of LA-based media group RYOT, traveled four times to Monrovia, Liberia, in order to orchestrate the distribution of liquid chlorine, the solution used to protect and disinfect from Ebola. Armed with a camera, Darg embedded himself with Red Cross workers charged with collecting the dead during the height of the outbreak. The end result is the Oscar-nominated short *Body Team 12* from RYOT Films and Paul Allen's Vulcan Productions, which exposed the devastation of the Ebola crisis on the ground through the eyes of Garmai Sumo, the lone female member of the body collection team.

The film – which was acquired by HBO Documentary Films and aired on the channel on March 14 – is just one of several irons in the fire for RYOT, which was founded by Darg, fellow filmmaker Bryn Mooser, and Martha Rogers – the daughter of Canadian media mogul Ted Rogers and member of the advisory committee of the Rogers Control Trust – in 2012 as a result of a

Haitian humanitarian mission.

"We realized that no one was making the link, that the media was reporting on the problem but not the solutions," Darg explains. "Out of frustration, we decided to form the company with a goal of connecting every story to an action, because we believe that the emotions generated in news and documentary content shouldn't be wasted by not letting people know what they can do to become part of the story."

In the time since, the studio has built out its multimedia network. The group now incorporates RYOT News, its news portal; RYOT Creative, an in-house agency creating media campaigns; RYOT Foundation, a non-profit working in post-disaster zones; RYOT Films, a film studio producing documentary content focused on current world issues; and its latest venture, RYOT VR, a content studio creating doc-style virtual reality (VR) films.

RYOT has shifted its focus to VR production in recent months due to the added layer of impact the medium provides. The past year has seen RYOT VR partner on interactive projects with news agency Associated Press and digital news site *The Huffington Post* to underscore the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis via *Seeking Home* and *The Crossing*, respectively; director Matthew Cooke on *Confinement*, a firsthand experience within solitary confinement; and Susan Sarandon on *The Nepal Earthquake Project*, immersing

viewers in the aftermath of the Nepal earthquake.

"We've always struggled to get people to engage with stories that may not be the most pleasant to consider, but being able to transport them right into the center of a disaster zone is, for us, a really exciting jump in technology," Darg notes. "And we've seen it. With the film I shot after the Nepal earthquake, the level of engagement and the reactions we were getting from people were so powerful, where people would take the headset off after watching it and be in tears."

With millions of Syrians crossing the Aegean Sea into Greece, the multimedia company will head back by month's end to continue in its coverage of the refugee crisis in both VR and traditional film, and later this year will look to create impactful short-turnaround films centered on the U.S. presidential election while dispatching crews to assorted hot spots. Darg says RYOT will further delve into modern technologies, experimenting with the likes of augmented reality (AR) – in which digital images are superimposed overtop real-world surroundings – built out by its in-house tech team. Forthcoming projects in AR include climate change experiences, to be announced on Earth Day (April 22) and slated to be released by the third quarter of 2016.

"We're always looking for people who are marginalized and don't have a platform to try and tell stories on their behalf," Darg says.

# NEW SENSATIONS

BY MANORI RAVINDRAN

Nonny de la Peña is one of the leaders in creating socially charged, immersive journalism, with hard-hitting work that tells “stories of consequence” while encouraging empathy.

**N**onny de la Peña has had something of a head start in virtual reality. Dubbed the “godmother of VR,” the former *Newsweek* correspondent was the first person to present a VR film at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival – back when a mass giveaway of Google Cardboard viewers was, well, virtually unheard of.

Now, the journalist-turned-filmmaker and CEO of VR studio Emblematic Group is the authority on the intersection between VR and reporting, and a passionate advocate of “immersive journalism” – news that enables people to have first-person experiences of the events described in stories.

“I can tell you that there were a lot of people who didn’t think that in any way virtual reality was applicable as a medium for journalistic projects,” De la Peña tells *realscreen*. “Certainly, that has changed.”

The artist, a Harvard graduate, was back at Sundance’s New Frontier showcase in January with two VR projects. *Across the Line* – co-directed with Brad Lichtenstein and Jeff Fitzsimmons – places a user at the scene of an anti-abortion protest, where they come face-to-face with pro-life picketers trying to intimidate patients entering a Planned Parenthood clinic. The project uses doc footage and scripted scenes as well as a montage of real audio from a protest. Her second project, *Kiya*, again uses audio as well as imagery from a real event, and users become “witnesses” at the scene



of a domestic violence homicide in which two sisters unsuccessfully try to save their sibling from being shot and killed by her ex-boyfriend.

“Maybe there’s some sensitivity to the fact that as a woman and the head of a technology company, I certainly feel like I’ve become a stronger feminist and more aware of the challenges of being a woman in this field,” said De la Peña. “But we have a great team here – it’s very balanced – and I think that everybody here recognizes these were stories of consequence and warranted the kind of time and effort that we put into getting them done.”

The work – which often employs recreations crafted from gaming software – is reflective of De la Peña’s platform as a socially engaged VR creator, with other credits including 2012’s *Hunger in Los Angeles*, where a user sees a diabetic in a food bank queue collapse and fall into a coma; *Project Syria*, a World Economic Forum commission that shows a bustling Aleppo street corner devastated by a rocket blast; and the MacArthur Foundation-funded *Gone Gitmo*, a virtual rendering of Guantanamo Bay.

*Kiya* was developed through a partnership between Al Jazeera America and Emblematic Group, and then selected by *The New York Times*’ VR division, NYT VR, for its Cardboard-friendly app ahead of Sundance. A “walk-around” version

of the film is also available for VR headsets, of which several models are slated for release this year. The much-anticipated HTC Vive – priced at US\$800 and set to start shipping in May – allows for 360-degree, room-scale motion tracking through the use of two base stations, while Sony’s PlayStation VR, with its 360-degree audio, motion tracking and multi-player capability, is also expected to drop by June.

“People like the Cardboard for its simplicity of distribution, but it’s going to be very interesting to see what happens when the headsets are actually on the market, and what kind of penetration VR has once headsets are available to consumers,” she says, adding that headsets allow for higher-quality graphics and, crucially, the opportunity to physically engage with the space in one’s living room. “It’s really interesting when you’re able to walk around as well,” says De la Peña. “I had one person tell me [about *Kiya*] recently, ‘Oh my God, I’ve never been in the room

with someone with a gun before,’ because you really have that sensation.”

Next up for De la Peña is a multi-part project with PBS investigative doc series ‘Frontline,’ which received a \$580,000 grant in December to explore VR in journalism. Together, Emblematic Group and ‘Frontline’ will develop three VR experiences, and also create a best practices VR bible for journalists.

Asked how reporters can experiment in VR against a backdrop of newsroom downsizing and slashed budgets, De la Peña suggests approaching local universities interested in VR and offering a trade of services – such as mentoring journalism students – for the use of such equipment as GoPro cameras.

“There are ways to be resourceful, but I’m a bad person to ask that question because I basically had to teach myself how to code, I made *Hunger in Los Angeles* for \$700 and bought a lot of favors,” she said.

“As one male exec in this business described me: ‘Oh, that Nonny De la Peña, she’s tenacious.’” •

**“There were a lot of people who didn’t think virtual reality was applicable for journalistic projects. That has changed.”**



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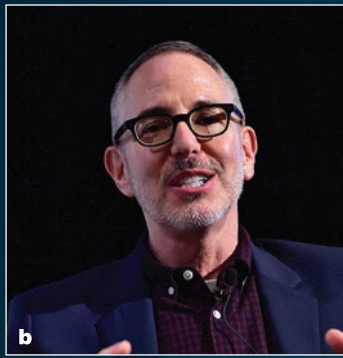
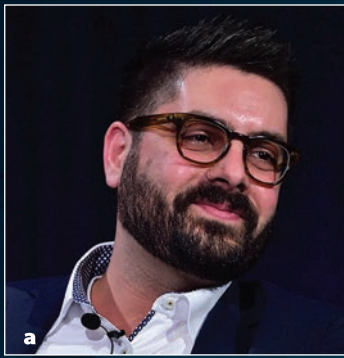
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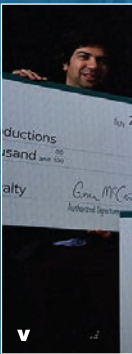
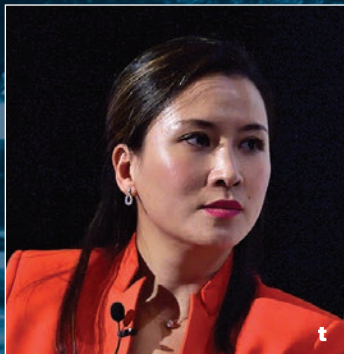
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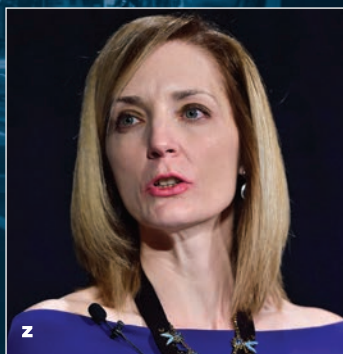
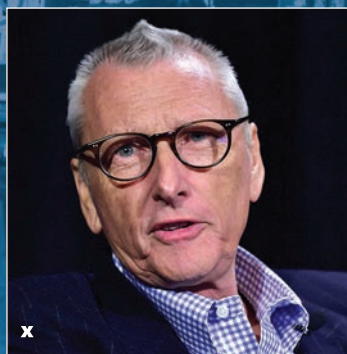
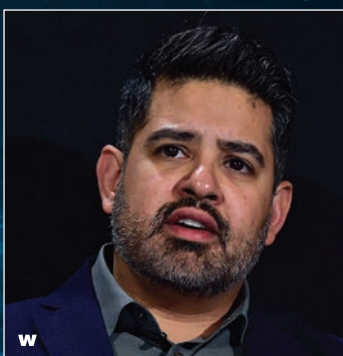
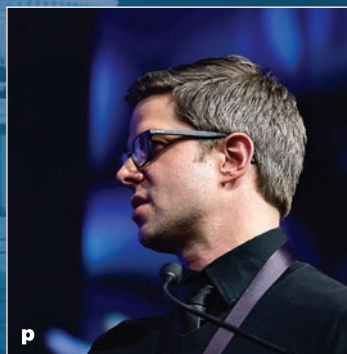


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**a)** National Geographic Channel's Tim Pastore **b)** Evolution Media's Douglas Ross **c)** History's Jana Bennett **d)** Discovery Networks International's Marjorie Kaplan **e)** TLC and Discovery Life Channel's Howard Lee **f)** All3Media's Jane Turton **g)** Earth Touch USA's Phil Fairclough **h)** High Noon's Jim Berger **i)** National Geographic Channel's Courtney Monroe **j)** Discovery Channel's John Hoffman **k)** Leola Westbrook of Mandalay Sports Media **l)** Allison Page of HGTV/DIY and Great American Country **m)** KLOK's Gary Carter **n)** Canal Plus' Diego Buñuel **o)** Drew and Jonathan Scott **p)** Summit Showdown winner Aaron Lewis **q)** Scripps Networks Interactive's Kathleen Finch **r)** UTA's Geoff Suddleson **s)** Keshet International's Sebastian Burkhardt **t)** IPCN's Rebecca Yang **u)** Beth Hoppe of PBS **v)** The FYI Development Lab **w)** Showtime's Vinnie Malhotra **x)** David Lyle of Pact U.S. **y)** Studio 71's Gary Binkow **z)** FYI's Gena McCarthy

# reen ummit



## Realscreen Summit 2016

Thankfully, the powers that be opted to dump snow on Washington, DC in advance of the annual Realscreen Summit as opposed to during it. That cleared the way for relatively balmy temperatures (warmer than Miami at the time!) and four days of networking, pitching and panel sessions – all housed within the Summit's new home at the Marriott Marquis. Thanks to our advisory board co-chairs for this year: Jana Bennett, president and general manager of A+E Networks' History; and Brent Montgomery, CEO of ITV America; and much thanks to our advisors for their help in steering the Summit's content. And of course, a warm thank you to our delegates and sponsors. See you in 2017!

(Photos by Rahoul Ghose)

AND ONE MORE THING

# COOL IN THE SHADE

BY MANORI RAVINDRAN



**T**here may not be a dedicated playbook on how to handle tough conversations around race, but CNN's forthcoming docuseries *United Shades of America* could be a close substitute. The Objective Productions-made series finds socio-political comedian W. Kamau Bell unpacking stereotypes and confronting prejudice around America. And whether he's observing a cross-burning with Arkansas Klansmen in the season premiere, or interviewing Portland's black community on the effects of gentrification, the Berkeley, California-based comedian says his go-to diffuser in a heated situation is a sense of humor.

Most recently seen on FX's 2012 series *Totally Biased with W. Kamau Bell*, the comedian, who also serves as an American Civil Liberties Union ambassador for racial justice, was approached by CNN about the show, originally pitched to the broadcaster by All3Media. It was Bell's idea, however, to make the eye-opening trip to Harrison, Arkansas, simply because he "could do something that no other show could do." For the remainder of the 8 x 60-minute season, premiering on April 24, Bell hangs out with "lifers" at California's San Quentin State Prison, discusses immigration with East LA residents, and explores community policing models in Camden, New Jersey – one of the country's most dangerous cities.

## **How did you get access to the KKK in Harrison?**

We have a great team that [executive producer Jimmy Fox] put together, and Star Price was the showrunner on Showtime's *Penn & Teller: Bullshit!* so he's been reaching out to people who may not want to be talked to and convincing them to talk to us.

The funny thing is, the people who do talk to you, they think that's how they can support their message. We look at it like, 'Why would you talk to us?' and they look at it like, 'Oh good. I get to spread my message to the world and recruit new members.' Because they believe in their side, and we believe their side is crazy.

## **Are you ever concerned people who tune in to the KKK episode might be doing so for the wrong reasons, and to reinforce their beliefs?**

I think the most likely thing is that people who are like, 'I don't think racism is really a thing anymore' are going to watch this show and go, 'Oh my God, I was so wrong.' Those are the people we're going for: people who are really on the fence about it. People who are on the extreme end of the Klan? The most I hope for is that they watch it and [see] how we make fun of them and maybe they start to go, 'Hmm, am I ridiculous?' The show takes a side.

## **How do you think the unscripted world is doing in broaching conversations around race?**

I think there's a broadening out of what unscripted is. These shows like *Morgan Spurlock Inside Man* and *Mike Rowe: Somebody's Gotta Do It* – these are [like] the shows that as a kid I used to watch on PBS. For me, it's just like taking that version of the show I used to see on PBS where a guy walks around and talks to people, but putting a bigger, bolder perspective on it. And I'm trying to be funny, I'm not trying to be witty or charming. I may be those things, but I'm actually trying to make you sit at home and laugh. This, for me, feels more like reality than a lot of the stuff I see on TV that has that label. •

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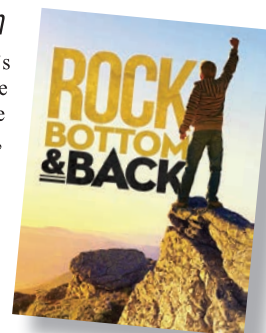
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## BIC Media's 'Rock Bottom & Back' docu-series underway

*Companion book to be released soon*

Everyone loves a good redemption story. It's difficult not to draw inspiration from people who have sunk to the lowest depths imaginable — whether through business failures, incarcerations, drug or alcohol dependencies, illnesses or other hardships — only to find their ways back to success, often helping others not to make the same mistakes.

The new docu-reality television series and companion book "Rock Bottom & Back" by BIC Media Solutions chronicle the personal stories of people from all walks of life who have overcome insurmountable adversities — from celebrities to not-so-famous ordinary people. Their stories are heartfelt, authentic and real.



• Tonja Myles was molested as a child and later became a prostitute due to a crack addiction. She is now a certified recovery specialist and started Set Free Indeed Ministry over two decades ago. Myles attended the State of the Union address at the invitation of former President George W. Bush.

• David Bottner, who was born into extreme poverty and suffered abuse and addiction, turned his life over to God at age 30. Now the executive director of The New Orleans Mission, he brings God and faith to the streets and is changing the face of homelessness.

• Whitney Strickland, CEO of Calculated Controls, was a workaholic and alcoholic until he hit bottom and contemplated suicide. Fortunately, he saw the light of hope. With the help of his father, Jerry Strickland, founder of AltairStrickland, the Strickland Family Foundation partnered with The Wheelhouse, a recovery center for men who have lost it all.

"These stories and more provide a running theme: *Never give up*," said Earl Heard, the show's creator and founder/CEO of BIC Alliance.

Heard personally knows what it means to hit rock bottom, which is why he is giving back by creating this television series and book.

"My hope is for the stories in 'Rock Bottom & Back' to inspire people everywhere to pursue their dreams no matter their circumstances," he said. "I survived and flourished, and so can others."

Other stories in the series and featured in the book include:

- Bea Aikens, who overcame an addiction to gambling and founded Lanie's Hope, a national advocacy group dedicated to building awareness and understanding of compulsive gambling as a condition.
- Deena Burnett Bailey, who is the widow of United Flight 93 hero Tom Burnett, helped found the Tom Burnett Family Foundation, which encourages people to be "everyday heroes" through education and philanthropic entities.
- Bradley Blue, a U.S. Army veteran who fought post-traumatic stress disorder and now counsels other veterans at Camp Hope in Houston on how to control the condition.
- Mark R. Laaser, a speaker and author who, as president and director of Faithful & True, is known as the leading Christian authority in the field of sexual addiction.
- Billy Rivers, a former outlaw biker and ex-convict from Louisiana who is now a chaplain and speaker for the Christian Motorcycle Organization.
- Stanley Roberts, a former NBA star who fell from grace due to drug use but later overcame dyslexia and illness to earn his college degree.
- Bobby Smith, a retired Louisiana state trooper who was shot in the face and blinded by a drug dealer in 1986 and now speaks to law enforcement officers and firefighters on dealing with trauma.

BIC Media Solutions, in coordination with its media partners, is developing the docu-series "Rock Bottom & Back," set to film this year. Mission Media Productions will produce a 22-minute film segment and a sizzle reel. The companion book with the same title, written by New York Times best-selling author Susan Mustafa, will be released soon by BIC Media Solutions. Los Angeles-based entertainment marketing consultant Tracy Balsz has been commissioned to assist BIC Media Solutions in branding and bringing awareness to the "Rock Bottom & Back" book and docu-series.

**For more information, visit [www.bicmediasolutions.com](http://www.bicmediasolutions.com), or contact Earl Heard or Rose Gladner at (800) 460-4242.**



From left, Rose Gladner and Earl Heard of BIC Media Solutions; Stanley Roberts, former NBA star; and Steven Scaffidi of Mission Media Productions visit during a filming session of "Rock Bottom & Back."



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